A comparative study of altruism in new religious movements with special reference to the Jesus Army and the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order.

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A Comparative Study of Altruism in New Religious Movements

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by

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Abstract

This thesis deals with altruism in two New Religious Movements (henceforth NRMs), namely the Jesus Army and the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. My hypothesis is that the more intensely the members are committed to the activities and practices of the two NRMs, the more altruistic they become, and consequently the members are more likely to help people in need than before they joined the NRMs. This does not mean that the members are more altruistic than non-religious people. It rather means that the NRMs change members' attitudes of mind and behaviour positively towards altruism. If this is the case, what factors of the NRMs bring this about, and in what way do the NRMs change members' attitudes positively towards altruism? The aim of the thesis is to illustrate this point through an exploration of the teachings, values, practices and communities of the two NRMs.

There has been much research into NRMs since the 1970s. This has usually concerned the typology of the movements, the charismatic authority of founders, and the motivation of the members for joining NRMs. Until now, no research concerning altruism in NRMs has been carried out, except in Japan. Clearly, then, it becomes apparent that new research is required on altruism in NRMs, and this is why this research has been undertaken.

I carried out sixty interviews as well as participant observation and a questionnaire survey to investigate altruism in the two NRMs. This research, it is hoped, will shed at least some light on this new subject and will pave the way for elucidating altruism in NRMs. This research showed that altruism was developed not so much by studying teachings as by relationships between members in the two NRMs. The conclusion is that the two NRMs change members' attitudes positively towards altruism through the combination of relationships between members, ethical teachings and practices.

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Notes on style

1) The Jesus Army / the Jesus Fellowship Church

In 1987, the Jesus Army was set up as the evangelising wing of the Jesus Fellowship Church to mobilise outreach in towns and cities. Since then, this movement has been called 'the Jesus Army', which has been officially named 'the Jesus Fellowship Church' since 1974. 'The Jesus Army' will be mainly used to represent this movement in this thesis.

2) Community house / community

The term 'community house' is generally used to refer to a residential community. The term 'community' without 'house' or 'residential' means a group of members having religious characteristics in common, and such terms as 'religious community' and 'spiritual community' are also used. In addition, some collocations relevant to the life in community houses are used such as 'communal living' and 'a communal life-style'.

3) Glossary

Buddhist terms and other unusual words, such as jargon in the movements, are explained in the glossary.

4) Abbreviations

Some abbreviations are used, as follows:

the FWBO	the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order
the WBO	the Western Buddhist Order
NRM	New Religious Movement

5) Order member / member of the FWBO

An Order member means a person who was ordained into the WBO, and there is no usage of 'member of the FWBO' in the FWBO itself. In this thesis, however, 'member of the FWBO' will be used for designating an Order member, mitra, and friends. These categories will be defined in chapter one (see p.32), chapter four (see p.87, 88) and glossary.

6) Style 1, 2, 3, 4

The Jesus Army has different styles of covenant membership with different levels of commitment. These styles will be defined in chapter three (see p.63) and the glossary.

7) Fictitious names

All names of interviewees in this thesis are fictitious. With fictitious names, as a matter of convenience, numbers will be used such as J1, J2 and J3 in the case of the Jesus Army and F1, F2 and F3 in the case of the FWBO.

1. Introduction: aims and methodology

Context and aims

One chilly night, I was walking with two members of the Jesus Army around the Strand in London. The Savoy hotel, one of the best known hotels in London, is located in this area. There is a community of homeless people less than thirty yards from one of the entrances to the hotel. There were over twenty people living in the 'cardboard city'. I followed the members of the Jesus Army as they approached the community. All eyes were turned on us. There were appealing eyes, alert eyes, covetous eyes, downcast eyes, and dull eyes. The members of the Jesus Army started talking to them without flinching. They said, 'Food is waiting for you. Come to Trafalgar Square later.' They talked with homeless people for about thirty minutes and then moved to a different place.

In front of St. Martin in the Fields Church at Trafalgar Square, the members of the Jesus Army set up a base with a double-decker bus and vans to provide food and tea or coffee for homeless people. This is one of their activities, called 'EDP (eat, drink and pray)'. How can we interpret it? To say they do it for the sole purpose of recruiting new members does not do it justice. On the other hand, it is too simplistic to attribute it to genuine altruism. This thesis investigates how their caring activities can be interpreted.

In Britain, many people are involved in charities which care for people in need and serve their communities. In England and Wales, there were over five hundred thousand voluntary organisations, of which 188,476 were registered charities[1] at the end of 1998[2]. Charities seem to be getting more professional, and

[1] The charitable purposes are altruistic and classified under four headings; the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion and other purposes beneficial to the community. Although it received only indirect mention in the preamble of the Statute of

many problems seem to be not only beyond individual effort but totally insoluble by outside agencies. What can inspire caring behaviour in such circumstances?

Through interviews with young people who have become involved in community service, as well as data from national surveys in the United States, Wuthnow (1995) contends that caring is not innate, but learned, in part from the spontaneous warmth of family life, and in part from finding the right kind of volunteer work. Wuthnow (1995) also argues that the best environment to nurture the helping impulse is the religious setting, where, in fact, the great deal of volunteering in the United States takes place. In these organisations, as well as in schools and community agencies, young people can find the role model and moral incentives that will instil a sense of service that they can carry into their adult life. If this is so, in what way do religious organisations nurture the helping impulse?

This study focuses on members of the two New Religious Movements (henceforth NRMs), namely the Jesus Army and the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, and considers why the members become involved in caring activities and how the NRMs can develop altruism. My hypothesis is that the more intensely the members are committed to the activities and practices of the two NRMs, the more altruistic they become, and consequently the members are more likely to help people in need than before they joined the NRMs. This does not of course mean that the members are more altruistic than non-religious people. It rather means that the NRMs change members' attitudes of mind and behaviour positively towards altruism. If this is the case, what factors of the NRMs bring this about, and in what way do the NRMs change members' attitudes positively towards

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Elizabeth I (the Charitable Uses Act 1601), the advancement of religion has been always a charitable object. Indeed, the very concept of charity is essentially religious in origin. Charitable activities and religions have been strongly connected (Inaba, 1999).

[2] Of these, 27,232 were subsidiaries or branches of other charities. This means that there were 161,243 'main' charities on the register of charity commission (Charity Commission for England and Wales).

altruism? I hope to illustrate these points through an exploration of the teachings, values, practices and communities of two NRMs[3] in the UK.

Roof (1978: 29) contends that 'church-linked beliefs and values are less and less a part of the cultural mainstream in modern industrial society. Whatever its functions in the past, one would hardly argue that church religion is a major source of cultural integration. . . .' Although religion may still exercise influence over an individual's private life, Roof (1978: 30) maintains that 'Greater privatization of beliefs and commitments generally can only mean that religion loses its traditional function of providing a religiously based moral order for the society.' If this is the case, there is a possibility that altruism in NRMs creates conflicts with society, because altruism based on religious belief can be regarded as intrusive by a society which does not expect religion to play a major role in cultural integration or moral order. This research also examines that.

There has been much research into NRMs since the 1970s. It has usually concerned the typology of the movements, the charismatic role of the founders, and the motivation of the members for joining NRMs. Neither social work nor altruism has been given heed in such research. I have encountered many members of NRMs both in Japan and in the UK, and they seemed to be kind people. It is, however, unwise to rely on only impressions. Indeed it is often said that Japanese New Religions[4] emphasise the 'this-worldly benefits' and 'the moral self-cultivation of the

[3] Many NRMs emerged in the late 1960s and the term NRM came into use among scholars in the 1970s (Arweck & Clarke, 1997; Beckford, 1985; Barker, 1995). I am adopting this term in respect of the Jesus Army and the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, since both movements were founded in the relevant period and the term NRM is 'an entirely appropriate, value-free term to be used at a time when there is a strong tendency to regard virtually all expressions of religion as equally valid' (Beckford, 1985: 15).

[4] The term 'New Religion' is usually used in Japan instead of the term NRM. The term New Religions came into use among journalists and scholars in the 1950s and has been widely used since the 1970s (Clarke, 1994: 1; Shimazono, 1992: 31-32). Generally speaking, Japanese New Religions denote religious organisations which are not part of established religions, that is, Shinto, Buddhism or Christianity, and which exist as independent organisations. However, Japanese New Religions do not make a total break with the established religious traditions. On the contrary, Japanese New Religions, if seen from the viewpoint of their teachings and rituals, reflect the heritage of the established Shinto and Buddhist traditions (Shimazono, 1992: 49-61; Clarke, 1994: 2; Earhart, 1974: 249). Japanese New Religions are generally syncretic and

individual' and are not concerned in the political and social movements about the improvement of society (Hardacre, 1986: 23). Recently, however, a few researchers (Shimazono (ed.), 1992; Kisala, 1992) have focused on the social ethics in Japanese New Religions. Shimazono (ed., 1992) analyses altruism in Japanese New Religions by two concepts, namely, 'Harmony Ethics' and 'Vitalism[5]', which are the common structure and the world view of the beliefs and teachings of Japanese New Religions. Kisala (1992) examines the social ethic of Japanese New Religions, focusing on the social welfare activities of two Japanese New Religions, namely, Tenrikyo and Rissho Kosei Kai. He presents the results of interviews undertaken with thirty members who are themselves active in social work, exploring their religious beliefs and the motivation for their involvement in welfare activities. I distributed a questionnaire on altruism in a Japanese New Religion, Rissho Kosei Kai in 1994. The survey data derived from my investigation[6] showed that the more intensely a member was committed to the religious practices of the religious organisation, the more interested he or she was in social problems and the more he or she took part in charitable activities (Inaba, 1998).

Up until now, no research concerning altruism in NRMs has been carried out, except in Japan (i.e. Shimazono (ed.), 1992; Kisala, 1992), and no empirical research has examined what makes members of NRMs altruistic. Clearly, then, it becomes apparent that new research is required on altruism in NRMs, and this is why this research has been undertaken.

One of the NRMs researched in this study is the Jesus Army. The Jesus Army is a Christian group called the Jesus Fellowship Church which is characterised by intense commitment to biblical fundamentalism of belief and

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assimilate many themes, such as the importance of purification and the role of the ancestors, from various religions such as Shinto, Buddhism, Confucianism and the folk religious tradition.

[5] In a cosmology of 'Vitalism' the whole universe is considered as one living body, the Great Life, and therefore it is believed that all things are harmonious, interdependent, and mutually sympathetic.

[6] The questionnaire was distributed to 221 members of the Nakano district located just next to the headquarters of Rissho Kosei Kai.

practice, communal living, strict supervision of members' lives and evangelism. It has its origins in the Charismatic renewal of the Baptist Church in Bugbrooke, a small village which is located several miles outside Northampton. Noel Stanton became the pastor of the congregation of Bugbrooke in 1957. In 1969 he claimed that he received an experience of Baptism in the Holy Sprit. After this charismatic experience, he encouraged others to speak in tongues and to accept baptism in the Spirit, and the church grew in numbers and people at the church became interested in the idea of a Christian community. In 1973, they decided to create a residential community and the first community house was inaugurated in 1974. In 1987, the Jesus Army was set up as the evangelising wing of the Jesus Fellowship Church to mobilise outreach work in towns and cities. About eight hundred people now live in community houses. Members in community houses share possessions. They run various businesses, such as farms, health food shops, and garages. The Jesus Army describes itself as 'an orthodox evangelical Christian church, upholding the universally accepted creeds of the Christian faith: the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and Athanasian Creed[7].' It makes particular efforts to evangelise those in need, especially homeless young people, those involved in drug or alcohol abuse, prisoners and ex-prisoners. In this work the Jesus Army aims to show 'Christian compassion and love, helping people to find themselves and stand on their own two feet[8].'

The other NRM researched in this study is the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (henceforth the FWBO). The FWBO draws on various Buddhist traditions such as Theravada, and Tibetan Buddhism for its doctrines and practices. The FWBO was founded in 1967 by Sangharakshita (Dennis Philip Edward Lingwood), an Englishman who lived in India for twenty years where he learned the traditions of Buddhism and practised them. The FWBO claims that since its

[7] A paper by the Jesus Army titled 'The Jesus Fellowship and 'New Religious Movements'.
[8] A paper by the Jesus Army titled 'About the Jesus Fellowship'.

foundation it has been committed to developing ways of practising Buddhism which meet the needs of people in the modern Western world. There are now about eighty[9] FWBO centres around the world, thirty[10] of them in the UK. These centres usually run introductory classes for the public and other activities for more experienced practitioners. Most people come into contact with the FWBO centres by attending a meditation class or a talk and then become involved with its other activities. Each centre composes a *sangha* or community of practising Buddhists who participate together in the study of Buddhism, meditation and devotional practices. There are residential communities and 'right livelihood businesses' around most FWBO centres. Many of the members live in community houses or flats, because they find living and working with other Buddhists helpful.

There are three main reasons why these two NRMs have been selected in this study. First, the Jesus Army and the FWBO are similar in several important ways. Historically, they both have their origins in the same period (the Jesus Army in 1969 and the FWBO in 1967) and the founders, both English, were born in the same period (Noel Stanton in 1926 and Sangharakshita in 1925). Because of these historical backgrounds, both of the movements are sociologically classed as NRMs. On the other hand, however, they state that they are not new in terms of doctrines and practices and draw on the traditions. The Jesus Army describes itself as an orthodox evangelical Christian church and fits within the pattern of charismatic (or neo-Pentecostal) 'New Churches' or 'House churches' (A leaflet by the Jesus Army titled *The Jesus Fellowship and 'New Religious Movements'*). Although the FWBO presents Buddhism in a way which is relevant to the modern West, it says that 'The essence of Buddhism is universal and unchanging, and it is that essence that we are trying to communicate. From that point of view, we are a fully "traditional" Buddhist school (Vessantara, 1996: 9).' Demographically, both of the two

[9] 68 urban Buddhist Centres and 17 retreat centres.
[10] 22 urban Buddhist Centres and 8 retreat centres.

movements are the same size; around 2,500 members who are involved in the Jesus Army in different ways and about 700 of them live in the community houses, and the FWBO has several thousand regular participants and about 800 fully committed members in the UK. Moreover, both of the movements value communal life-styles and have a policy of economic self-sufficiency. The Jesus Army runs businesses such as farms, health food shops, and garages, while the FWBO has 'right livelihood businesses' such as health foods shops, vegetarian restaurants, and gift shops. These similarities afford the opportunity of considering whether or not there are common structures which nurture altruism.

The second reason is that the Jesus Army and the FWBO are derived from different religions, Christianity and Buddhism respectively. Weber (1978: 447-450) distinguished two categories of 'prophecy': ethical prophecy and exemplary prophecy. In 'ethical prophecy' the prophet may be an instrument for the proclamation of a god and his will, and has received a commission from god to demand obedience as an ethical duty. On the other hand, in 'exemplary prophecy' the prophet is an exemplary man who demonstrates to others the way to religious salvation which he himself has found. These categories are, of course, explanatory uses of ideal-types. Both the Jesus Army and the FWBO have some characteristics of both the categories of prophecy. However, we shall know that the Jesus Army is classed as an NRM based on 'ethical prophecy' and that the FWBO is categorised as an NRM based on 'exemplary prophecy' after examining their characteristics. These differences provide the opportunity of seeing whether the two movements change their members' attitudes towards altruism in a similar way, and how different the interpretations of altruism by the members who pursue these different religions are.

The last reason for selecting these two NRMs is typological. Wilson describes:

> the new movements are primarily concerned with the here and now. They promise, whether by a regimen of asceticism or a licence for hedonism, or by some mixture of the two, to increase the happiness and the spiritual power of their devotees in this world and to protect them from the limitations and the baleful influence of everyday life in

> contemporary society. All of them offer new freedom, new power, a new sense of peace that can be obtained quickly and relatively easily (1976: 62).

Regarding the above salvation in present life, Wilson (1976: 63) constructs a classification based on three themes in the teachings of NRMs with the proviso that the themes are 'by no means mutually exclusive'. The first theme is (1) 'salvation is gained by becoming acquainted with a special, perhaps secret, knowledge from a mystic source', the second theme is (2) 'ultimate salvation and knowledge comes from the liberation of powers within the self', and the third theme is (3) 'real salvation is attained by belonging to a sacred community, whose life-style and concerns are utterly divergent from those of worldly people' (ibid.). The Jesus Army, which advocates communal living, can be categorised by the third theme. The FWBO can be classed by both the second and the third categories because it values meditation to get enlightenment while it supports a communal life-style.

Regarding the difficulty of building up a typology of NRMs, Clarke (1997: xxxi) notes 'Their [NRMs] diversity and their spread across so many cultures make NRMs as difficult to classify as religion is to define, although there have been some impressive endeavours in this area, among them Wallis's classification of NRMs on the basis of their response to the world.' The classification by Wallis (1984) divides NRMs into three different categories based not on the contents of belief but rather on the orientations to the social world into which they emerge (ibid.: 4). The first orientation is rejection of the world. The world-rejecting movements have some characteristics listed below.

- The world-rejecting movement views the prevailing social order as having departed substantially from God's prescriptions and plan (ibid.: 10).
- The world-rejecting movement condemns urban industrial society and its values, particularly that of individual success as measured by wealth or consumption patterns. It rejects the materialism of the advanced industrial world, calling for a return to a more rural way of life, and a reorientation of secular life to God (ibid.: 10).
- Rather than a life pursuing *self-interest*, the world-rejecting sect requires a life of *service* to the guru or prophet and to others who likewise follow him (ibid.: 11).

- The world-rejecting movement expects that the millennium will shortly commence or that the movement will sweep the world,. . . then a new world-order will begin. . . (ibid.: 11).
- The movement is a 'total institution', regulating all its adherents' activities, programming all of their day but for the briefest periods of recreation or private time. Not only will the member live in the community, normally he will also work for it (ibid.: 13).
- The communal life-style of the world-rejecting movement exhibits a high level of diffuse affectivity. Members of such movements kiss each other and hug in greeting, hold hands with other members, or call endearments and offer constant encouragement (ibid.: 16).

The second orientation is affirmation of the world. The world-affirming movements have some features shown below.

- The style of the world-affirming movement lacks most of the features traditionally associated with religion. It may have no 'church', no collective ritual of worship, it may lack any developed theology or ethics . . . (ibid.: 20, 21).
- In world-affirming movements, the social order is not viewed as entirely and irredeemably unjust nor society as having departed from God as in the world-rejecting case. The beliefs of these movements are essentially individualistic (ibid.: 24).
- producing social change is dependent upon producing individual change. The individual must 'take responsibility' for the circumstances around him and for transforming them (ibid.: 24).
- The world-affirming movements emphasise the present . . . (ibid.: 27).
- The world-affirming movement offers immediate and automatic benefits of a concrete kind through the practice of some formula or recipe . . . (ibid.: 27).
- . . . coping with the demands made upon us to succeed in modern capitalist societies, of coping with the dilemmas of individual achievement (ibid.: 28).
- . . . coping with our sense of constraint, of facilitating the desire for liberation from social inhibitions, of breaking free from the bonds of social roles to reach the 'real' person beneath (ibid.: 30).
- . . . coping with the pervasive loneliness of life in modern society (ibid.: 32).
- Many of the world-affirming movements have been to some extent influenced by Hindu and Buddhist idealist philosophies. But they have also drawn substantially upon developments in modern science and psychology for their beliefs and practices . . . (ibid.: 34).

Regarding these characters of the world-affirming movements, Clarke points out:

> they are not necessarily as materialistic and this-worldly oriented as this terminology may suggest. World-affirming movements can also be concerned with questions of spiritual development *per se* and with such ultimate questions as life after what they would describe as mere physical death, the true self being immortal (1997: xxxii).

The third orientation is accommodation to the world. The world-accommodating movements are 'less significant for the purpose of characterising those new religions which predominantly emerged in the post second world war period' (Wallis, 1984: 5). These movements emerged in an earlier period than the post second world war period, are of little numerical significance, and are an adjunct to an existing religious attachment rather than a complete alternative to it as a path to salvation (ibid.: 5). On the other hand, the world-accommodating movements consist of individuals who feel something to be lacking in their previous religious lives, particularly an active experience of God's power working within them (ibid.: 36).

This typology presented by Wallis is of course not universal. Wallis explains:

> There is no claim advanced here that the analysis is of universal applicability, relevant to all new religious movements in no matter what historical or cultural circumstances. The aim of this work is a more modest one, essentially involving an attempt to make some sense of the forms and dynamics of new religious movements in the West in the period since the second world war (ibid.: 5).

Moreover, 'a movement may shift around considerably during the course of its development (ibid.: 6)' and this creates difficulties in classifying NRMs into an exact mapping. None the less, this typology seems very useful. The Jesus Army can be categorised as a world-rejecting movement and the FWBO seems to be categorised as a world-affirming movement.

Methodology

This research follows a sociological procedure, and therefore a non-empirical and normative discussion is deliberately avoided. Berger contends:

> Questions raised within the frame of reference of an empirical discipline (and I would emphatically consider sociological theory to be within such a frame of reference) are not susceptible to answers coming out of the frame of reference of a non-empirical and normative discipline, just as the reverse procedure is inadmissible. Questions raised by sociological theory must be answered in terms falling within the latter's [sociological] universe of discourse (1967: 179).

Although my interpretation draws partly on the insights of psychology, the sociological study of religion is my main approach to altruism in NRMs. The reason for giving priority to the sociological study of religion is that altruistic acts require the presence of others and therefore altruism[11] does not exist independently from the social relationships, and that the sociology of religion is an interpretative science of meaningful social action and interaction (Weber, 1949; 1978). As the essential perspective of the sociological theory on religions, Berger (1967: 180) noted 'religion is to be understood as a human projection, grounded in specific infrastructures of human history' and remarked 'it can be seen without much difficulty that, from the viewpoint of certain religious or ethical values, there can be both "good" and "bad" implications to this perspective.' However, as Berger (1967) pointed out and carried out his research, in this research such valuations will be kept strictly apart from the theoretical analysis of religious influence on altruistic attitudes and behaviour. Put differently, this thesis will not deal with valuations of altruism in NRMs but deal with the influence of NRMs on altruism of members and the analysis will remain value-free. Of course, this does not exclude the investigation of what members consider as altruistic.

In all social systems, there are specific norms and restraints that provide the members in the systems with orientations for making decisions. Besides personal dispositions, behaviour and actions of people are influenced and led by the inherent factors in social systems. Therefore, it is necessary to explore not only the social construction of NRMs but also their cultural settings and the shared meanings of their members. In regard to evangelisation, Clarke notes:

> it seems absolutely necessary to understand at least something of the belief systems and cosmologies of new religions in order to understand how and why they recruit in the way they do, how they establish themselves, and how they evangelize (1987: 6).

[11] We shall examine the definition of altruism in chapter two.

It would not be hard to understand that for the members of NRMs evangelism might be the ultimate altruistic act, if their belief systems and cosmologies are investigated in many ways. There seems, however, no perfect method to help researchers understand the belief system of specific religious movements and their implicit meanings. York (1995: 27), for example, notes that 'participant observation does not readily clarify the meaning of actions nor application of generalization to actions not directly observed, and survey interviews themselves tend to frame information in the researcher's categories rather than the respondent's.' Therefore, multiple research methods are necessary and during the course of this research a number of different methods, such as participant observation, interviews, and questionnaires were used in order to gain as much knowledge about altruism in the NRMs as possible and to understand their belief systems and cosmologies from many viewpoints.

In order to conduct the multiple research methods, it is important to explain the aims of the research to the leaders and/or members in NRMs and to be accepted by them. Relevant to this point Wilson remarks:

> Just how wide the field of enquiry will be will depend, in large measure, on the extent to which leader and/or members of a movement are willing to facilitate research and to co-operate with the researcher. The lack or limitation of co-operation does not entirely prevent research, but it influences what can be discovered, and how what is discovered is understood (1990: 8).

It is, however, not necessary to explain every detail of the research plans. What we need to do is to present a basic posture of lack of deception (see Richardson et al., 1978). Fortunately, the Jesus Army and the FWBO accorded co-operation and helped me with the research in many ways.

This is a sociological comparative study, and Wilson claims:

> Comparison is a fundamental requirement of sociological method. From comparisons arise hypotheses of wider generality, and formulations that can transcend, in their abstraction, the circumstances of given cases. Without betraying the peculiarities and particularities of any given movement or any given cultural context, the sociologist should be able to gain some useful interpretative insight from an

> examination of comparable cases, and from the generalizations that his colleagues and teachers have already established with respect to them (1982: 14).

Reference will be made to statistics for the purpose of comparing behaviour of the members of the two NRMs with each other and with that of the UK public. This comparison, however, is not to compare altruism in the NRMs and that of the UK public. There is no intention to draw any conclusions about altruism in the UK public in general either. It is considered that such a comparison helps us discern the features of the NRMs.

Knowledge about NRMs 'is always an interpretation, influenced by the personal preferences, attitudes, and states of consciousness that the researcher (and reader) brings to the study' (Stone, 1978b: 141). Therefore, epistemologically speaking, bias is inevitable, whereas '[the] greater the consciousness of possible bias, the greater the certainty about the foundation on which our knowledge of these new religious movements rests' (Stone, 1978b: 141). In order to minimise bias and maximise objectivity, Stone (1978b) encourages several methods, such as collaborative research, keeping a research journal, showing first draft research reports to participants, and including their objections to interpretations in the research report. In this research, I made use of these conventional methods as much as possible. I also analysed a variety of material, such as articles on NRMs by academics and journalists, and the newsletters and literature written by the movements themselves.

Hunsberger and Ennis (1982) cast doubt on the assumption that interviewees would tend to confirm the experimenter's hypothesis. For example, interviewees would be motivated to appear more religious when the experimenter is a clergyman. Hunsberger and Ennis investigated the possibility of experimenter effects influencing the results of questionnaire and interviews studies of religious attitudes and they did not find clear indications of experimenter effects in their studies. They concluded that 'while it would be dangerous to assume there are no experimenter effects in questionnaire and interview studies of religion, we would

argue that these effects have not been demonstrated to date, and until they are, we would do well to remain skeptical' (Hunsberger & Ennis, 1982: 137).

I suffered the same anxiety as Barker (1984: 24) when she researched the Moonies, namely that the people I was studying could be influenced by my presence and the very fact that I was studying them. I presume that research into altruism in NRMs could influence the members' attitudes and even make them more altruistic. Even if research into altruism in NRMs does not make them more altruistic, it could at least make them pretend to be more altruistic. Motives and normative orientations that are relevant to altruism can be aroused through interviews and/or questionnaires, and consequently they can be more altruistic. It is human nature to want to appear in a good light and if people are asked whether they are kind to others, they are unlikely to reply in the negative. Regarding this matter, however, there is not much the sociologist can do. Barker (1984: 24), for example, concluded that it was impossible to know just how much the research disturbed what was happening. On the other hand, the sociologist of religion may perhaps trust the words of the members of NRMs more than those of the general public:

> their new beliefs contained a strong emphasis on honesty in personal relations, and, especially since we were 'approved' by the leaders of the group, the respondents were quite open to us, a fact that we even had to take into account in comparing some of the results of personality inventories with 'normal' populations, which are assumed *not* to be so honest (Richardson et al., 1978: 241).

In order to measure altruism some researchers use experimental techniques. Typically, a situation is created by experimenters where the participant has a choice about helping another or is asked to donate blood. This approach is based on the assumption that there is a generalised tendency within a certain individual to behave altruistically and its tendency is stable over time and across different situations (Rushton, 1982). However, people may express their altruism in various ways and the assumption of behavioural consistency is dubious (cf., Krebs & Hesteren, 1992). In this approach, researchers select measures of

altruism primarily for their convenience in measurement and consequently the measures may exclude the altruistic behaviour which respondents display naturally. Another major problem is, as Krebs and Hesteren (1992: 143) point out, the assumption that behaviour that has the consequence of helping others stems from altruistic motives is unwarranted.

The second method to measure altruism is to use questionnaires with psychometric inventories which are composed of many items designed to measure altruism as 'traits'. This psychometric approach is based on the assumption that if altruism is a 'trait' of personality, a certain test should assess it. This approach is also based on the assumption of behavioural consistency. Participants are asked about their responses to imaginary situations such as giving directions to a stranger, donating money to a charity, and helping a disabled person across a street. Methodologically, this approach recognises the limitations of self-report measures as well as the problem concerning the assumption of behavioural consistency.

The third technique to measure altruism is to wait for an altruistic act to occur spontaneously and then observe it, for example, to go to a place where a disastrous earthquake occurred. This technique, however, is almost impossible when one is researching a specific group. The researcher may not be allowed to stay in a group for a long time. On the other hand, observation does not show the motivation to a certain act. It does not reveal how altruism has been developed, either.

Although interviews seem to overcome all the limitations of the three approaches, there is a question of the reliability of the past of interviewees, because the memory is re-constructive under the new religious life and religious converts may exaggerate the benefits of transformations. In order to get descriptions of the commitment to altruistic activities before interviewees joined their movement, a researcher depends upon the reminiscences of the respondents. It is uncertain to what extent the statements of the respondents are valid. The statements must be impaired because of the defects in memory and the interpretations of the past in

terms of the present religious life. What the sociology of religion can do is to make use of multiple measurements and continuously examine the interpretations in the light of findings from participant observation and communications with members.

We shall now look into methodology with four headings; Access and information-gathering, Participant observation, Interviews, and Questionnaires.

Access and information-gathering

My preparation of the research project in the UK began in May 1996 and in January 1997 I wrote a letter with a reference of my supervisor, Professor Peter B. Clarke of King's College, the University of London to the central office of the Jesus Army in Northampton and the FWBO Communications Office in London. The letter asked them to help me with my research project. I received favourable replies, and I visited both of the movements in February 1997.

Since then, there have been few obstacles to my attending their services, events, and classes. Admission to most events as a participant observer was almost entirely without problems. Any difficulties there were usually arose on a special occasions. For instance, the Jesus Army twice declined my requests to stay at their community houses in Northampton during major events for the simple reason that they were busy. The Jesus Army also declined my request to meet the leader, Noel Stanton. I was told that the Jesus Army had attracted so much attention that Noel Stanton rejected requests of interviews. The FWBO declined my request to meet the founder, Sangharakshita, during my stay at their community house in Birmingham, because it was the founder's birthday and he had guests for a small private party. I was also denied copies of a newsletter which was intended just for senior members of the FWBO only. Basically, however, both the Jesus Army and the FWBO have been very helpful and supplied me with whatever information I asked for.

Participant observation

The qualitative method of this research is based on Weber's *Verstehen*, which is 'the attempt to comprehend social action through a kind of empathetic liaison with the actor on the part of the observer. The strategy is for the investigator to try to identify with the actor and his motives and to view the course of conduct through the actor's eyes rather than his own' (Parkin, 1982: 19). *Verstehen* can be attained by participant observation. The definition of 'participant observation' by Wilson (1990: 8) is 'the sociologist participates in the activities of the sect as a revealed outsider, seeking by observation and association to understand its members, who accept him in their midst and submit to being observed.' Participant observation is fundamental to qualitative research in the social sciences. Wilson (1990: 14) describes it as 'perhaps the core method of enquiry into sects and the key to understanding them.' On the other hand, Wilson notes:

> Since the sociologist is to remain detached and apart, there will inevitably be a gap between the ultimate meaning for him, and the meaning for the believer, of the same formulations. But he can, and indeed must, seek to acquire an empathic understanding of *their* commitment and *their* beliefs (Wilson, 1982: 13).

Although it might be the case that participant observation is the most effective means of attaining *Verstehen*, how would it be if a researcher is neither born nor brought up in the culture in which he or she tries to conduct participant observation? Saliba (1995: 111) states that 'the observers should not apply an interpretation or judgement based solely on their own cultural assumptions and points of view. Rather, they should attempt to understand people's behavior from the perspective of the latter's own cultural and religious norms and values.' I am neither British nor Western. It might be therefore more difficult to attain *Verstehen* when the research project focuses on a western NRM. Western scholars, however, have written many worthwhile monographs on non-western societies. Participant observation is necessary and useful in understanding the members in NRMs when a researcher is neither born nor brought up in the culture by which the members are influenced.

It is very important to be accepted not only by the leaders of NRMs but also by the members being studied. I managed to establish and maintain a rapport with the members of both movements. In the case of the FWBO, I was easily accepted and welcomed, because they knew that I was from Japan whose culture has been influenced by Buddhism. Although the Jesus Army welcomed me, I had to make more of an effort to be fully accepted: I attended Sunday morning services and went to their community house in London and lunched with them and washed the dishes.

I attended services, events, and classes in both the movements. I made participant observation on around thirty occasions in each movement, such as 'Jesus Explosion' event in Manchester in February 1997, 'Jesus Celebration' event in Birmingham in February 1997, 'Alive Weekend' event in Northampton in March 1997, 'Jesus Festival' at Trafalgar Square in August 1997, 'Wembley Praise Day' event at Wembley Conference Centre in November 1997, 'Jesus Festival' at Trafalgar Square in August 1998, EDPs in October and December 1998, Sunday services in 1997, 1998 and 1999, 'the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order: the FWBO Day' festival in London in April 1997, 'Buddha Festival' in May 1997, meditation classes at the North London Buddhist Centre in 1997 and 1998, Introductory Buddhism Course at the North London Buddhist Centre in April and May 1997, Pujas at the North London Buddhist Centre and the London Buddhist centre in 1997 and 1998, and retreat and mediation class in Birmingham in September 1999.

I was welcomed, fed, given lifts and furnished with a place to sleep. However, I feared that the research project might be terminated because of my detached attitude towards them as a researcher. I was careful to maintain a balance between rapport and detachment throughout participant observation.

Interviews

Although the best way to investigate the transformation of members' attitudes towards altruism might be to observe them closely for several years

following their affiliation to their movement, there are insurmountable difficulties in conducting such long research. This thesis will, therefore, rely primarily on interviews. Wilson remarks:

> In some respects, the interview is by far the best of the specifically sociological instruments available. It provides face-to-face contact between sociologist and respondent, and, providing the sociologist has some skill in inter-personal relationships, this opportunity in itself should allow him to dispel the doubts that his respondents may possibly entertain (1982: 16).

Moreover, concerning the doubts that the respondents may misrepresent their past life:

> Because the subjects [respondents] really believed that their past life had been 'washed clean' by virtue of their conversion, they were very willing to talk about their personal histories. It seemed as if this past life could no longer harm them in any way, and they could treat it in a very objective fashion (Richardson et al., 1978: 241).

It seems, therefore, that the interview is a useful instrument to investigate the transformation of members' attitudes towards altruism.

In general, my methodological techniques and analysis of interviews comply with the sociological research delineated by Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994) , and Wuthnow (1995). Before and after the interviews, I surveyed the literature that was available on empirical studies and read the back numbers of the magazines published by both the Jesus Army and the FWBO. Pilot interviews were conducted in order to obtain information for building questionnaires and designing in-depth interview schedules.

The in-depth interviews were loosely structured so that interviewees could talk freely about their lives and experiences in their movement. An interview schedule was, however, used during the interview programme to obtain a number of factual answers such as demographic data and to explore their views on particular aspects if these were not spontaneously forthcoming. Some of the questions in the interview schedule were influenced by other related studies, especially Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994) and Wuthnow (1995). If a question was, for some reason,

irrelevant to a particular respondent it was not pursued. Conversely, questions which were especially relevant were explored in greater detail. A copy of the interview schedule is provided in the Appendix.

Some researchers have included ex-members in their surveys as a way of incorporating criticism and presenting a multi-voiced approach (Puttick, 1994). However, it is very difficult to contact ex-members. This research is concerned with an exploration of altruism in the religious context rather than fine measurements on every aspect of the Jesus Army and the FWBO. Therefore, it is not necessary to interview ex-members.

I explained to respondents that the interviews were a part of my doctoral research at King's College, University of London; that the interview would last about one hour; and that the information they would give me in the interview was to be treated as confidential and anonymous. However, for the purpose of reducing psychological effects on the respondents to a minimum, I did not explain that the subject of the research was altruism, and the questions on altruism and charitable acts were asked at the end of interviews. Before the questions on altruism and charitable acts, I asked the respondents about the benefits of belonging to their movement and how their movement affected them. Some of them talked spontaneously about caring and altruism. I asked the members how their attitudes had changed after joining their movement and what made the changes. It is quite difficult to know what kind of attitude and consciousness the members had before joining their movement. There is not necessarily a total break between former and present attitudes and behaviour. Even if there is a total break, it might be caused by another factor. On the other hand, members' self-reported accounts of change of attitudes cannot be taken as objective reports. Beckford notes:

> It is the speakers' way of using available resources to construct an appropriate view of reality. Speakers' decisions about the appropriateness of different resources are made partly by reference to their sense of the kind of context in which they are speaking. And one of the considerations to be taken into account in making such decisions

> is the set of rules which are considered to govern speech and action in particular contexts (1978: 251).

Examining Jehovah's Witnesses' conversion accounts, Beckford concludes:

> Witnesses explain by implicit reference to the movement's rationale that it makes sense to have experienced certain things in the way that they claim to have done. . . . converts often reproduce a rehearsed script, for it implies that the processes may be subconscious and that there is a logic of congruence linking the features of the conversion account to, amongst other things, the group's ideological rationale. In the case of the Watchtower movement the links are in my opinion quite clear because the ideology is highly obtrusive in its literature, activities and organization (1978: 260, 261).

In other words, as Watanabe (1968) points out, they are inclined to answer how they ought to be rather than how they are and the more exemplary the members are, the more similar their answers, since their ideal images are formed by the teachings of their movement. This may be the case. However, it is still important to ask them the above question, because their answers recount how they want to be and hence can be a clue to the meanings and constructions of altruism in their religious context.

In regard to the number of in-depth interviews, Oppenheim (1992: 68) notes 'there can be no definitive answer to this question, but thirty or forty interviews is probably typical.' This research is qualitative and the aim of the in-depth interviews is not to collect data and statistics but to develop ideas and examine my hypothesis. This aim of quality rather than quantity determined the number and spread of in-depth interviews. The number of in-depth interviews of this research is sixty: each movement has thirty interviews[12].

The way of recruiting people for in-depth interviews may lead to bias in the sample. Oppenheim (1992: 69) states, however, 'it would be unrealistic to expect a depth-interview sample to be a precise microcosm of the intended sample in the mail

[12] The research on Soka Gakkai by Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994) had thirty in-depth interviews with a questionnaire survey of about 1,000 sample; the research on the Unification Church by Barker (1984) had also thirty in-depth interviews; Puttick (1994) conducted thirty-five in-depth interviews for her PhD thesis on the Rajneesh Movement.

survey. What we need is a sample whose outlook, attitudes, percepts and experiences are likely to cover a similar range and variety.' I took care to ensure my sample had a diversity of characteristics through a quota sample method, bearing in mind that this research focuses on the transformation of attitudes towards altruism. The interviewees of the Jesus Army are: 8 male members living in community houses, 7 male members living outside, 8 female members living in community houses, and 7 female members living outside, in total 30 members. The interviewees of the FWBO are: 6 male Order members[13], 6 male mitras[14], 3 male friends[15], 6 female Order members, 6 female Mitras, and 3 female Friends, in total 30 members. Most of them were conducted in London and some of them were conducted in their headquarters: Northampton in the case of the Jesus Army and Birmingham in the case of the FWBO. The mean age of interviewees of the Jesus Army is 32.1 years old, whilst that of the FWBO is 38.0 years old[16].

The interviews took place in one of the guest rooms or a living room at one of their community houses at an arranged day and time (in the case of the FWBO) or a time after lunch on Sundays (the Jesus Army) in 1998 and 1999. The interviews took between thirty minutes and one hour per person. All of the interviews were recorded on tape and were transcribed. All names of interviewees in this thesis are fictional. With fictitious names, as a matter of convenience, numbers will be used

[13] The main body of the FWBO is the Western Buddhist Order (WBO), which was founded one year after the founding of the FWBO. The members of the WBO are called Order members and are responsible for directing the activities of the FWBO. Although Order members are fully committed to following the Buddhist Path to Enlightenment and to Sangharakshita, as their spiritual teacher, they are not monks or nuns living a monastic life-style. In order to become an Order member, an ordination is required. We will see these in detail in chapter four (see p. 87).

[14] Mitra is a Sanskrit word for 'friend'. A mitra is someone who is actively involved in the FWBO. Some mitras are thinking of becoming Order members, others may remain mitras. In asking to become a mitra, four things are required such as a vow to stay with the FWBO only of all the many Buddhist and other spiritual groups. We will see these in detail in chapter four (see p. 87, 88).

[15] Anyone can go along to activities of the FWBO centres. Some people go to the centres and take some meditation classes or other courses but do not have a strong commitment to Buddhism. The FWBO calls those people Friends. Being a Friend puts you under no obligation.

[16] Regarding the questionnaire survey (see p. 117), the mean age of the respondents of the Jesus Army was 31.7 years old, whereas that of the FWBO was 39.7 years old.

such as J1, J2 and J3 in the case of the Jesus Army and F1, F2 and F3 in the case of the FWBO.

The next method to be addressed is that of questionnaires. The results of the questionnaire survey will be expected to complement findings from my participant observation and interviews.

Questionnaires

In general, my methodological techniques and analysis of questionnaires comply with the empirical investigations delineated by Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994), the European Values Study (1990) and other sociologists of religion who contribute their papers to academic journals such as 'Journal of Contemporary Religion', 'Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion', and 'Social Compass'.

Wilson (1990: 14) notes that 'The bald questionnaire, without a previous apprehension of the emotional tone, the implicit values, and the assumed facticities of life for sectarians, would produce only a travesty of reality if, indeed, it met with any sort of response at all.' Before I conducted the questionnaires, as a participant observer I had attended Sunday worships, meditation classes, Buddhism courses, events, and rituals in both the Jesus Army and the FWBO, so as to attain *Verstehen.* Pilot questionnaires were conducted in May 1997 (unstructured questionnaires) and in August 1998. By reviewing the findings of the pilot questionnaires, I reformed questionnaires.

Comparison in the proper questionnaire survey between one movement and another requires several conditions. Apart from the questions on the specifics of the practices and teachings related to each movement, the questions of the questionnaires, the size of its sample, and the way a sample of members is constructed must be comparable. Above all, the sampling method is very important. Random sampling by using a computer requires a list of members. Quota sampling requires information of gender, geographic, and age distribution of the membership. Neither the Jesus Army nor the FWBO had accurate information on the size and

shape of the population which constituted both the movements. It was financially impossible for me to survey all of the members in the UK, which amounted to over 2,000 in each movement. In these circumstances, I planned to distribute a questionnaire to all the members attached to their headquarters. The Jesus Army, however, was unhappy with my request to distribute a questionnaire to all the members attached to their headquarters in Northampton. Instead, I was permitted to distribute a questionnaire to all the members of the Jesus Army in London. Therefore, for the FWBO I distributed a questionnaire to all Order members and mitras through the London Buddhist Centre in order to compare to the Jesus Army in London, although the FWBO did not object to my initial plan to distribute a questionnaire more broadly.

During a Sunday service in October 1998, the questionnaire forms were distributed to all of the members of the Jesus Army in London where almost all the members attended. I explained the project:

> I am Keishin Inaba from King's College, University of London. As you know, I have been researching the Jesus Army as part of my Doctoral project. Some of you have already helped the research as an interviewee. Steve gave me permission to distribute a questionnaire. For the results of a survey like this to be of use it is important that there is a very high response rate, so I would be very grateful if you take this seriously. Please return it to me next Sunday service. Anonymity will be preserved. Thank you very much for your help.

I also handed questionnaires to one of the leaders in London to make sure that all of the members had the questionnaire. There were 38 usable returns of the 75 questionnaires distributed in the Jesus Army, amounting to 50.7 per cent response rate.

In the case of the FWBO, the sample was all Order members and mitras in the London Buddhist Centre, which had 135 in total; 45 Order members and 90 mitras. In October 1998, all of these respondents were sent a postal questionnaire through the London Buddhist Centre together with a covering letter from the communications office of the FWBO in the North London. The letter says (Vishvapani: FWBO Communications Office on 15th October, 1998):

Dear Friend,
Accompanying this letter you will find a questionnaire which is being sent to all Order members and mitras at the LBC [London Buddhist Centre]. It has been compiled by Keishin Inaba, a PhD student at Kings College who is making an in-depth study of social and political attitudes in the FWBO. This is the first time that anyone has studied us in this way, and I have already been helping Keishin with this work.

Please do take some time to fill the form in. Both Ratnagosha and I have looked at it and we want to support Keishin in his work. Not only will this survey help Keishin, it will also be very useful to us to have this information. It will very interesting to see the results, and interesting to see what we can learn from them.

For the results of a survey like this to be of use it is important that there is a very high response rate, so I would be very grateful if you take it seriously, and ask other Order members and mitras to do the same. Please reply promptly, as Keishin would like replies by 10th November. If you received this letter after that date, please fill the form in any case. They should be returned to the bookshop in the LBC.
Yours in the Dharma,

There were 70 usable returns of the 135 questionnaires distributed, amounting to 51.9 per cent response rate. In total, there were 108 usable returns of the 210 questionnaires distributed, amounting to 51.4 per cent of the samples. The data of the questionnaires was entered into a computer package Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) to analyse.

Needless to say, the respondents to the questionnaire survey in London are not representative of the movements as a whole. Moreover, self-report studies done through questionnaires do not always reflect actual behaviour. What people say and what people do are often different. Although the total reliability of respondents cannot be guaranteed, Wilson (1990: 17) considers that 'by and large, sectarians constitute a public that is almost certainly more honest and more conscientious than the general population.' Hence, in spite of some difficulties and drawbacks, the results of the survey are trustworthy and of value in that they complement interviews and give us the demographic data of members in London; the idea of their attitudes and values.

The questionnaire contained twenty-seven questions including demographic data, such as gender, age, nationality, marital status, educational background, present occupation, and religious background. Some of the questions

were influenced by the research on Soka Gakkai in Britan by Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994), the European Values Study (1990) and British Social Attitudes survey. The questionnaires were answered anonymously. For the purpose of investigating the correlation between altruism and various factors, the respondents were asked to rate the commitment of their family to charitable activities in their childhood; their commitment to charitable activities before joining their movement; their religiosity before joining their movement; and their commitment and devotion to their movement.

When we investigate the correlation between religion and altruism, the measurement of religiosity is crucial[17]. Religiosity is a continuous, rather than a discrete variable. This means that for most human beings, religiosity is not an 'all or nothing' question, but a matter of degree. Hence, as Beit-Hallami and Argyle (1997) point out, questionnaire respondents should be asked to indicate levels of agreement with various statements, and not just 'yes' or 'no'. The respondents were asked several questions on attitudes towards the devotion and commitment: frequency of prayer, meditation, and reading the Bible or Buddhist teaching. Subjective religiosity was also employed in order to test the comprehensiveness of devotion and commitment. It was measured by answers to the question, 'How would you rate your commitment to the movement?' Respondents could score on a scale from 1 to 5 with 5 being the strongest rate and 1 being the weakest.

This research is concerned with an exploration of values related to altruism in the religious contexts rather than fine measurements on every aspect of the Jesus Army and the FWBO. Nevertheless, it is necessary to examine a cluster of attitudes and values of the members, because attitudes are interlinked with components of other attitudes. Further explanation of attitudes will be given in

[17] In the psychology of religion, this issue has been dealt with by using the theoretical distinction between 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' religiosity (Allport & Ross, 1967). Intrinsic religiosity means that people see religion as an end in itself and that they take it very seriously. Extrinsic religiosity denotes that people see religion as a means to other ends.

chapter six. As mentioned, altruistic acts require the presence of others and altruism does not exist independently from social relationships. Therefore, in addition to the questions about altruism and charitable activities, the respondents were asked a number of questions such as the importance of family and friends, political attitudes, moral attitudes, and about personality. The questionnaire was produced as a piece of two-page size A4 pink paper. The copies of the questionnaires on the Jesus Army and the FWBO are provided as Appendix.

Since my strategy for achieving an understanding of the members of the NRMs follows sociological methods that necessitate a detached and objective approach, there will inevitably be a gap between my understanding of their attitudes and their meanings members of the movements have (cf., Wilson, 1982: 13). This gap sometimes highlights the potential difficulties in reconciling an academic analysis of a religious movement with the movement's own vision of itself. In order to bridge the gap and to acquire an understanding of their commitment and their beliefs, I showed the results of the questionnaires and draft of this thesis to the spokesmen of both the movements, and I corrected some factual errors which they pointed out. Of course, this does not mean that I changed my opinion and analysis according to their opinions. I asked them to give me their views, if they had any objection to my interpretation. The views of these spokesmen are provided in the footnotes.

I will now turn to a survey of the relevant literature to locate the contribution of my research in the general context of the sociology of altruism with special reference to NRMs.

2. Survey of literature

This chapter will present a literature review of the research on attitudes, values and altruism. In addition to the survey of literature, the chapter will also propose a working definition of altruism.

Studies of altruism

The term 'altruism' was coined by a French sociologist, August Comte (1798-1857) and joined the English language in 1853 in translation. The original French term 'altrusime' was suggested by the French legal phrase 'le bien d'autrui' (the good of others), and was formed from the Italian equivalent, 'altrui', itself a derivative of the Latin 'alter' or 'other'. Altruism is precisely 'other-ism', the effort or actual ability to act in the interest of others (Novak, 1992: 2). Since then altruism has been an analytical concept in the social sciences. Comte (cf., 1851: 556f) considered that within the individual there were two distinct motives: one was egoism and the other was altruism. Comte acknowledged that human beings had self-serving motives even if they were helping others, and called the motivation to seek self-benefit 'egoism'. On the other hand, there are some kinds of social behaviour which comes from an unselfish desire to help others, and Comte called this type of motivation 'altruism'. Some discuss altruism in different terms, such as beneficence, benevolence, charity or compassion instead of altruism. Durkheim argued that no society could exist without its members acknowledging the worth of their peers and sacrificing on behalf of others (Bellah, 1973). This optimistic perspective of the capabilities and inclinations of human nature has been discussed and sometimes criticised by philosophers, theologians and behavioural scientists. Although the term 'altruism' is of only recent coinage, the behaviour to which the term refers has been examined since ancient times. Some have argued that

mankind is innately good, and others have maintained that human beings are essentially selfish or even evil.

Rushton and Sorrentino (1981) provide an historical perspective on altruism. They argue that there have been three main views on altruism. The first is that humans are innately evil or bad (e.g. selfish, sinful, aggressive and non-social), and that socialisation is required to make them social and altruistic. According to Rushton and Sorrentiono (ibid.), many writers of the Bible, the Sophists (5th and 4th Century B.C.), Chinese Confucian philosopher Xun zi (3rd Century B.C.), Machiavelli (1469-1527), Hobbes (1588-1679) and Freud (1856-1939) held this first view. The second is that humans are basically good and that they can be enhanced or perverted by social conditions. Socrates (5th Century B.C.), Chinese Confucian philosopher Meng zi (4th century B.C.), Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), Rousseau (1712-1778), Maslow (1908-1970) and Rogers (1902-1987) held this view (ibid.). The third is that humans are neutral: basically neither good nor bad. Plato (427-374 B.C.), Epicurus (341-270 B.C.), Locke (1632-1704), Marx (1818-1883), Watson (1878-1958) and Skinner (1904-1990) held this third view (ibid.).

Whether altruism is innate or acquired is another issue. Allport (1897-1967), Kohlberg (1927-1987) and Rushton (1980: 10) provided abundant evidence in support of the theory that altruism was learned and was able to be improved by social learning. As mentioned earlier, Wuthnow (1995) also took this view. On the other hand, Novak (1992: 28-32) points out three obstacles to cultivate altruism: a neuronal obstacle, a psychological obstacle, and a sociological obstacle[1]. First, the neuronal obstacle is that significant moral progress is impossible because of the structure of our brains. The second obstacle to altruistic transformation is psychological. Each human being born into this world longs to be special; a unique centre of importance and value. The very behaviour, dispositions and attitudes

[1] The biological study of altruism has been undertaken by such scholars as Haldane (1932), Wynne-Edwards (1962), and currently Mark Ridley and Richard Dawkins since Darwin (1809-1882) (cf., Rushton & Sorrentino, 1981).

that help people emerge from childhood as relatively autonomous individuals become to some extent psychological barriers to the emergence of altruism. Human being's natural quest for selfhood creates psychological habit patterns which are difficult to alter. The third obstacle is the sociological or social one. The social groupings to which people belong implicitly reinforce an ingrown and out-group mentality which at best sets limits on the growth of altruism and at worst is antithetical to it. However, Krebs and Hesteren (1992) contend that individuals normally acquire the capacity to perform increasingly adequate types of altruism as they develop, and that individual differences in altruism stem from the interaction between the stage of their development and the opportunities and demands of the social contexts they create and encounter.

In the early 20th century the social sciences cultivated disciplines for the study of negative aspects of humanity such as crime and insanity. Sorokin (1889-1968) noticed this and observed that 'Western social science has paid scant attention to positive types of human beings'(1950: 4). Sorokin carried out sociological studies of good neighbours and Christian saints focusing on the characteristics of altruistic persons and how people became altruistic. He found that most professed to be religious in some sense; the majority were female, and there seemed to be no relationship between intelligence and altruism. Self reports concerning the motivation of altruism showed factors such as parental training, life experience, religion and education to be particularly relevant (Sorokin, 1950). In his later studies Sorokin found religiosity to be the key factor of the majority of altruists in history (Seaton, 1996: 12). Since his research, positive aspects of human nature, such as altruism, have been increasingly researched. There has been sociological research by interviews on altruism in contemporary Americans (cf. Wuthnow, 1991a; 1995).

Research into altruism has usually considered questions such as 'why and under what conditions people sacrifice their lives for the sake of others', 'when and under what conditions people reach out to help somebody in need or distress', and

'under which conditions a person is more likely or less likely to help others' (cf., Neal, 1982; Wispe, 1978; Rushton, 1980). Many research findings show that good mood and happiness can facilitate altruism (cf., Aderman, 1972; Weyant, 1978; Cunningham, 1979; Rosenham et al., 1981). There is also abundant literature on 'the empathy-altruism hypothesis'. This hypothesis is that sympathy or empathy for the needy is the motive for altruistic activities. An extension of the hypothesis is that people feel more sympathy towards relatives and friends than towards strangers or enemies. This hypothesis is corroborated by evidence (cf., Montada & Bierhoff, 1991). Not all altruistic activity, however, is believed to be based on sympathy or empathy. Some activity is considered to be based on normative obligation. This assumption is not saying that altruistic activities in close relationships would be motivated by sympathy or empathy, and that altruistic activities towards strangers would be motivated by normative obligation. Montada and Bierhoff examined the debates on this matter:

> Even risky prosocial activities in favour of strangers, such as rescuing persecuted people in a totalitarian state, might be motivated by empathy (Oliner & Oliner, 1988), and prosocial acts in close relationships, like donating a kidney to a close relative, might be motivated by feelings of moral obligation (Fellner & Marshall, 1981). Hoffman (1987) tried to integrate these two basic orientations and argued that empathy/sympathy and normative views are combined in moral affects such as empathic anger, guilt feelings, or empathic injustice (1991: 5).

Above all, the term 'altruism', as Novak (1992: 3) notes, has the advantage of not being rooted in a specific religious linguistic tradition and serves as a general term that captures an important family resemblance among the world's diverse ethical vocabularies.

Studies of attitudes, values and religion

It is helpful to draw attention to similar types of studies of the correlation of religion with some attitudes and values other than altruism, because attitudes are

interlinked with components of other attitudes and values are deeply related to motives guiding people to behave in a certain way[2].

Rokeach (1969a) examines whether those who are religious have a pattern of values that is distinctively different from those who are less religious or non-religious. The findings from sample of 1,400 Americans over aged 21 showed that the religious, the less religious, and the non-religious possessed value systems that were different from one another. According to Rokeach (ibid.), religiously oriented people consistently ranked the value of salvation higher and that of pleasure lower than those who were less religious and non-religious. Moreover, the religious typically ranked the moral values of forgiving and obedience higher and the competence values of independence and intellectuality lower than the less religious and non-religious. Since the research of Rokeach (1969a), a considerable body of empirical research has emerged during the three decades concerning the relationship between Judeo-Christian religiosity and the individual's orientation to social justice (Argyle & Beit-Hallahmi 1975; Gorsuch & Aleshire 1974; Marx 1967; Perkins 1983, 1885, 1992; Petersen & Takayama 1984; Wuthnow 1973). Nevertheless, the question of whether such religiosity has a significant effect on people's attitudes towards issues of social justice remains open for debate.

People's behaviour at elections gives an indication of their preferences regarding policies and governments, and their underlying political values and commitments. Research by Starup and Harris (1997) on religious beliefs and social values among the laity of the Church in Wales indicates that religion affects voting behaviour. 89.7 per cent of the respondents voted at the general election in 1987. The rate was a higher figure than that for the electorate as a whole (75.3 per cent).

The study of Hayes (1995) examines the differential impact of religious identification on political attitudes in several western nations such as the UK, the

[2] Further accounts of attitudes and values will be given in chapter six.

USA, Germany, and Italy. The study showed significant effects of religious identification on political attitudes: religious affiliates were consistently more inclined to disapprove of abortion and to favour the influence of religion in politics than non-religious people were. Furthermore, Hoge and Zulueta (1985) demonstrated that the religious beliefs of American Christians had a direct impact on private values such as family life, sexuality and personal honesty.

Regarding the correlation between religion and attitudes on moral issues, Scheepers and Van Der Slik analysed the data derived from the Dutch Family Surveys which were conducted in 1992 and 1993. They found that, so far as moral attitudes were concerned, the effects of individual religious characteristics such as religious involvement and religious beliefs outweighed the effects of other characteristics such as educational level and personal income. Moreover, they found that male moral attitudes were relatively strongly affected by public interaction within their religious community whereas female moral attitudes were relatively strongly affected by private religious contemplation[3]. Stark and Bainbridge also examined the correlation between religion and attitudes on moral issues. Analysing various surveys and data, Stark and Bainbridge (1996: 66) conclude that religion plays a central role in sustaining the moral order.

It seems, therefore, that there is considerable research that indicates religious beliefs have impact on values and attitudes. As mentioned, attitudes are interlinked with components of other attitudes, and values are deeply related to

[3] Regarding attitudes and values of New Agers, Heelas and Bruce question the claim of New Agers that enlightenment and authenticity improve personal and social relationships. Bruce (1998) contends that the New Age promotes vigorously the individualism, relativism and cultural diversification which are the essential preconditions for its existence. In response to Bruce, Heelas (1998: 262) states that 'For Bruce . . . the New Age suffers gravely from its successes in rejecting the social order; for New Agers, the greater the rejection the better.' Heelas accepts the view that New Agers have a diagnosis of the ills of modern societies and have therapies, values and attitudes which are effective in curing those ills. Opinions differs on this point. Moreover, there is very little agreement as to self-centredness in the New Age (Rose, 1996: 330-334). It cannot be discussed here for lack of information based on empirical research.

motives guiding people to behave in a certain way. From this viewpoint it may be said that religious beliefs have impact on altruism.

Studies of altruism and religion

Starbuck (1899: 49- 51) gave eight categories for the motives and forces leading to conversion: (1) fear of death or hell, (2) other self-regarding motives, (3) altruistic motives, (4) following out a moral ideal, (5) remorse and conviction for sin, (6) response to teaching, (7) example and imitation, and (8) urging and other forms of social pressure. The representative instances given by Starbuck to the category of altruistic motives are 'I wanted to exert the right influence over my pupils at school', 'I felt I must be better and do more good in the world', and 'It was love for God who had done so much for me' (ibid.: 50). The findings of his survey are notable. Starbuck wrote:

> Only 5 per cent are altruistic motives; and if we select from these the ones who mention love of God or Christ as leading them to a higher life, we find only 2 per cent. This is significant in view of the fact that love of God is a point of great emphasis in Christian ethics. It is of interest to compare fear of hell and conviction for sin, which are prominent, with hope of heaven and love of Christ and God, which are almost absent (ibid.: 53).

By contrast, with regard to the new life after conversions, Starbuck (ibid.: 126) stated that 'there is clearly bound up in the process a self-forgetfulness, a sympathetic outgoing which apparently exactly contradicts the exaltation of self.' Starbuck gave some instances of what the respondents said:

- I was no longer self-centred. The change was not complete, but there was a deep undercurrent of unselfishness.
- The change made me very affectionate, while before I was cold to my parents.
- My motive to chase worldly riches was changed to that of saving others.

(ibid.: 127).

Starbuck concluded (ibid.: 128) that in a number of cases 'an immediate result of conversion is to call the person out from himself into active sympathy with the world

outside.' Starbuck went on to argue that the outcrops of self-appreciation and of altruism were two aspects of the same thing:

> The heightened worth of self and the altruistic impulses in conversion are closely bound up together, and the differences between them lie simply in the different content of consciousness, determined by the direction in which it is turned. The central fact underlying both is the formation of a new ego, a fresh point of reference for mental states. . . . in conversion the element which is most fundamental from the standpoint of priority is the wakening of self-consciousness, while the essential factor from the standpoint of development is the process of unselfing (ibid.: 129, 130).

Thus, Starbuck thought that in conversion the most fundamental priority was the awakening of self-consciousness and that the essential factor from the standpoint of development was the process of 'unselfing'.

There has been a considerable volume of empirical research into the correlation between altruism and religion. Some researchers have found religion related to altruistic behaviour. In 1973, the American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup) conducted a survey of 1502 respondents. This survey included the question, 'How often do you feel that you follow your religious beliefs and take concrete action on behalf of others?' Barbara Langford and Charles Langford (1974) assessed this survey and pointed out that church attenders perceived themselves as more helpful towards others than non-church attenders. A study by Nelson and Dynes (1976) was conducted in the Southwest of the USA eight months after a city had been struck by a damaging tornado which produced extensive and varied helping behaviour. Independent variables were devotion such as the frequency of table prayers, church attendance and subjective religiosity. Dependent variables were contribution to funds, donation of goods and participation in formal voluntary social work. The findings showed that independent variables were positively related to dependent variables.

Cline and Richards (1965) conducted a survey in the Salt Lake area[4] in the USA and reached different conclusions, finding no relationship between the religiosity factors (as measured by frequency of church attendance, frequency of prayer, and contribution of money) and such variables as 'having love and compassion for one's fellow man', and 'being a Good Samaritan'. Darley and Batson (1973) and Annis (1976) also showed that religiosity was unrelated to offering help to others. In another study, no relationship was found between religiosity and volunteering to help people (Smith et al. 1975). Moreover, Rokeach (1969b) noted that those who rated high on church attendance were more likely to be insensitive and unconcerned for disadvantaged groups.

I now turn to consider why there was such disparity in the results of the above studies in the 1960s and the 1970s. One possibility is that altruistic attitude might be so much a part of many organised religions that respondents failed to answer self-report inventories honestly. On the other hand, religious people might be more likely to answer questionnaires with honesty, because of their beliefs that a Supreme Being knows people's acts in all situations. Methodological problems such as the measurement of altruism, the measurement of religiosity, the amount of respondent diversity, and the control of situational variables might contribute to the mixed results (cf. Spilka, 1970).

Since the 1980s, various studies have shown that religion promoted altruism. An analysis based on findings from a questionnaire survey of 300 undergraduate students in the USA indicated that religious persons were more likely to carry out altruistic acts (Zook et al., 1982). In the study by Lynn and Smith (1991), those who did voluntary work in the UK gave religion as one of the main reasons for their participation. By analysing various surveys such as British Social Attitudes, Gallup Poll and British Household Panel Survey, Gill concludes:

[4] Religious preference was 72 per cent Mormon, 9 per cent Protestant, 4 per cent Catholic, and 4 per cent other.

> there is a great deal of evidence showing that churchgoers are relatively, yet significantly, different from nonchurchgoers. On average they have higher levels of Christian belief (which is hardly surprising), but, in addition, they usually have a stronger sense of moral and civic order and tend to be significantly more altruistic than nonchurchgoers (1999: 261).

Research by Perkins (1992) examined the relationship between Judeo-Christian religiosity and humanitarianism. The study was based on data collected during 1978-1979 at five diverse colleges and universities in England and the USA and data collected during 1988-1990 at the same institutions. The two statements used to measure humanitarianism were (1) 'People who have done well in life have an obligation to help the less fortunate' and (2) 'It is the responsibility of all members of society to help those members who are unable to help themselves.' The two statements used to measure religiosity were (1) 'People would be better off if they returned to religion, not only for spiritual and ethical guidance but for answers to many questions which mankind is too limited to answer satisfactorily' and (2) 'Religion can help resolve and give guidance to the pressing moral, social, and even political problems of the day.' Perkins concludes:

> Religiosity appears to be most salient in directly promoting humanitarian compassion. The influence of many socio-demographic factors often associated with social compassion in other populations failed to attain any level of significance among these student data. Hence these data suggest that the nature of one's religious commitment might remain one of the few important influences on humanitarianism for young persons in the college setting cross-nationally (1992: 359).

The study of Yablo (1990) contrasted native-born Thai and the USA citizens on the relation between religion and altruistic behaviour. The results showed that the people in Thailand, where 95 % of the population is a Buddhist, displayed a stronger orientation towards altruistic behaviour than the USA citizens. Interview results revealed qualitative differences in philosophies and rationale regarding altruistic behaviour: the Thai interviewees were influenced by Buddhist doctrine, while the USA interviewees reported being less influenced by religion and more

influenced by pragmatic considerations. The findings of this study suggest a relationship between cultural and/or religious values and altruistic behaviour.

Regarding the contribution of religion to voluntary work, Wilson and Janoski (1995) analysed the data derived from the three-wave Youth-Parent Socialization Panel Study by the University of Michigan. The results indicate that the relation between religion and voluntary work is complex and that there should be caution in generalising about the connection. With regard to the habit of Americans of giving to charitable organisations, Regnerus et al. (1998) found the correlation with religiosity by analysing the data from the 1996 Religious Identity and Influence Survey. The 13 per cent of the American population which considered itself non religious gave less money to charitable organisations than did the rest of the population which held religious beliefs to some degree. Moreover, the results showed that 'which religious tradition a person professes and practices is less important than the fact that they practice one' (Regnerus et al., 1998: 490).

Altruism and NRMs

Wilson (1976) regards the presence of NRMs as confirmation of secularisation[5], Wuthnow (1978) interprets NRMs as a form of experimental religion, and Stark and Bainbridge (1985) regards NRMs as religious revivals. It is worth noting that society lost some moral values through secularisation and NRMs may exercise influence over an individual's private life by supplying shared moral values.

Religion used to serve as the symbolic basis for societal stability, solidarity and integration. Biblical religion used to embody an authoritative style of moral order (Tipton, 1979). Religion has lost its overarching authority over social activities and has become one of the sub-systems of society such as the economy.

[5] Wilson (1966: xiv) defined 'secularisation' as 'the process by which religious institutions, actions, and consciousness, lose their social significance.'

During the long-term process, society has changed from the one which is based on the local community (*Gemeinschaft*) to the one based on the impersonal association (*Gesellschaft*) (see Wilson, 1982; 1988). This radical process of secularisation, Wilson (1988: 196) notes, 'brought consequential changes in other social institutions and in their value-orientations.' The social system no longer functions to fulfil the will of God. Wilson (1988: 197) states that 'the transcendent and overarching social values are more likely to canvass the welfare of the people.'

Although religion has lost its traditional function of providing a religiously based moral order for society and may not regain the direct power that it held in pre-modern times, NRMs may contribute to the solution of new kinds of social problems such as equality of rights and respect for life which are specific to advanced industrial or late-capitalist societies[6], whilst NRMs themselves may become a social problem (see Beckford, 1990). Moreover, as mentioned previously, there is a possibility that altruism in NRMs creates conflicts with society, because altruistic activities based on religious belief can be regarded as intrusive by a society which does not expect religion to play a major role in cultural integration or moral order.

Many NRMs emerged in the late 1960s. There has been much research into NRMs since the 1970s, whilst empirical research has increasingly emerged concerning the relationship between Judeo-Christian religiosity and altruism since the same date. However, altruism has not been given heed in research on NRMs. There must have been reasons for this. One possibility is that researchers on NRMs may have been so much preoccupied by the typology of the movements, the charismatic role of the founder, and the motivation of the members for joining NRMs.

[6] Beckford (1990: 7) notes 'The social problems of the post-World War II era in advanced industrial societies have, in addition to showing some continuities with the old issues of labor and political participation, displayed a remarkable shift toward issues of the quality and sustainability of life on a domestic and an international level. Class conflicts persist, of course, but their expression is nowadays likely to be modulated by gender, race, ethnicity, colonialism, and age, among other things. Consequently, the themes of many social movements tend to center on issues of personal dignity, self-determination, equality of rights, and respect for life and the environment.'

Another possibility is that some researchers on NRMs may have considered that NRMs are a social problem or NRMs do not contribute to society.

NRMs have been pictured in the mass media as controversial and threatening. No matter what the different groups did, they were marked as basically all the same and all problematic. Beckford (1985: 6) lists two reasons for it: (1) lack of Information; information about the movements is simply not available to the public and most people are ignorant about the history of minority religious groups; (2) The general public were indifferent to organised religion and did not make any independent assessment of the movements' religious merits or demerits. Robbins (1988: 166) points out another reason for it: NRMs are particularly controversial because 'they tend to constitute highly diversified and multifunctional enclaves lying outside of the web of governmental supervision.'

All of these factors may account for the fact that up until now little research concerning altruism in NRMs has been carried out.

Defining altruism

A good place to start is to examine the definitions of altruism in other fields and formulate a working definition of altruism for the purpose of this thesis on altruism in NRMs. Originally, Comte used altruism to denote the unselfish regard for the welfare of others, or a devotion to the interests of others as an action-guiding principle (see Wispe, 1978: 304). Apart from external forces such as increased status, social desirability or social approval, it has also been pointed out that feelings of guilt can motivate altruism and that feelings of guilt seek compensation that can be achieved through altruistic acts (Carlsmith & Gross, 1968; Regan et al., 1972). If altruism is, however, defined as the willingness to help others without normative obligation and without expecting benefits at a later time, we could rarely find actions altruistically motivated. Macaulay and Berkowitz (1970: 3) defined

altruism as 'behavior carried out to benefit another without anticipation of rewards from external sources.' Regarding their definition, Rushton and Sorrentino noted:

> [this definition] includes both the altruist's intentions and his or her behaviour. It does, however, exclude such rewards from internal sources as self esteem, self praise for one's action and relief from empathetic distress, alleviation of feelings of guilt. Such an exclusion has the practical advantage of avoiding both unobservable variables as well as the philosophical issue of whether there can ever be a truly unselfish act (1981: 426).

In this regard, Rushton's view is that 'the *primary* focus of research attention should be on altruistic *behavior*, and that postulated motivators such "empathy" and "norms of social responsibility" are hypothetical constructs, to be added only if they can account for the behavioral regularities more thoroughly' (Rushton & Sorrentino, 1981: 427). Rushton concluded:

> the behavioral definition also solves the endless, and fruitless, debate as to whether such a thing as *true* altruism exists. For example, it may be true that there will never be a total absence of *all* possible rewards, including such *internal* ones as the relief of guilt, pleasure for having lived up to an internal standard, reduction in a sense of injustice, or termination of a sympathetic feeling of pain for another . . . however, let us note that there is a class of behaviors which are carried out that benefit others. Furthermore, these behaviors often are carried out in the absence of immediate reward and sometimes at some cost. Most people consider such behavior by their peers a virtue. It is useful to have a word for such behavior, and "altruism" is the one designated (1980: 10).

Montada and Bierhoff (1991: 18) defined altruism as 'behaviour that aims at a termination or reduction of an emergency, a neediness, or disadvantage of others and that primarily does not aim at the fulfillment of own interests', adding that 'the behaviour has to be carried out voluntarily' (ibid.: 18). This definition by Montada and Bierhoff seems the most suitable one for a sociological study of altruism. I have accordingly adopted it as a working definition for my survey. The meanings and constructions of altruism among the members of the two NRMs will be examined in chapter seven by analysing interviews with the members.

Discussion

There is abundant evidence in support of the theory that altruism is learned behaviour and is capable of being improved by social learning. There is also a considerable volume of research into the correlation between altruism and religion. These efforts to relate religious beliefs to altruistic behaviour met with mixed results in the 1960s and the 1970s. Since the 1980s, various studies have shown that religion can promote altruism. Nevertheless, there are still some controversial problems. For example, one study suggests that there should be caution in generalising about the connection between religion and voluntary work. Another study suggests the possibility that those who go to church frequently are more likely to be insensitive and unconcerned for disadvantaged people.

Previous research on the relation between religion and altruism has focused on the correlation with the practice of religion such as the frequency of church attendance. It is probably impossible for such research, which is based on questionnaire surveys, to examine in what way religion changes people's attitudes towards altruism. Although there are a few surveys on altruism through interviews, those questions are still open and little is known about the issue on altruism in NRMs.

My thesis intends to contribute to the debate on NRMs in two ways. First, it will show whether NRMs change members' attitudes of mind and behaviour positively towards altruism, and demonstrate what factors of the two NRMs researched in this thesis bring this about and the ways in which the two NRMs change members' attitudes towards altruism. Second, it will pave the way for considering whether there are common structures in the NRMs which develop altruism, whether the NRMs change their members' attitudes towards altruism in a similar way, and how different the interpretations of altruism by their members are.

I will turn to the history, teachings, and practices of the Jesus Army and the FWBO, as these are expected to facilitate an understanding of the members' attitudes towards altruism.

3. History and characteristics of the Jesus Army

As mentioned in chapter one, there are several similarities between the Jesus Army and the FWBO. Historically, they have their origins in the same period (the Jesus Army in 1969; the FWBO in 1967) and the founders were born around the same time (Noel Stanton in 1926 and Sangharakshita in 1925). Both of the NRMs state that they are not new in terms of doctrines and practices and draw on the traditions of Christianity and Buddhism respectively, and the Jesus Army objects to the use of the word 'NRM'. Demographically, both of the movements are the same size. Moreover, both of the movements value a communal life-style and have an economic self-sufficiency policy[1]. On the other hand, both NRMs have, of course, their own particular characteristics. However, are they similar structurally and, if so, is it the common structures which nurture altruism? Or is it rather the unshared features of the two movements and their own particular characteristics, and do those particular characteristics affect differently the members' attitudes towards altruism? For the purpose of providing the base on which the investigation of the above questions will be carried out, in this chapter I shall first relate a brief history of the Jesus Army and then examine its characteristics. The FWBO will be similarly dealt with in chapter four.

Let us begin with the history of the Jesus Army[2].

[1] [View of the Jesus Army, John Campbell] I have always understood 'self-sufficiency policy' as a 'grow your own'. Most of our members are non-communitarian, and among community members some have external jobs and some have community based employment.

[2] The main sources of literature reaching to the Jesus Army are: the writings from the Jesus Army itself; Cooper and Farrant (1997); Newell (1997); Curl (1976). A PhD thesis of Curl (1976) includes the research on the Jesus Fellowship Church under the title of the Bugbrooke Chapel. In this sociological study, Curl investigated the doctrine, community, commitment, meeting for worship, organisation, leadership, evangelism, conversion, socialisation, and institutionalisation in the Bugbrooke Chapel. Although his research is out of date, the information derived from the investigation is of use in the study of the origin of the Jesus Army. Newell's paper (1997) 'Charismatic Communitarianism and the Jesus Fellowship' is the most recent research on the Jesus Army. He has been a participant in more than one of the community houses over a period of twenty five years. While the data presented in his paper is taken from the Jesus Army, the information about communal living is valuable.

History

The Jesus Army, which has been officially named the Jesus Fellowship Church since 1974, has its origins in the 1960s during the Charismatic renewal at the Baptist Church in Bugbrooke, a small village five miles west of Northampton which at that time had a population of eight hundred. The leader of the Jesus Army, Noel Stanton became the pastor of the congregation of the Baptist Church in Bugbrooke in 1957. According to the Jesus Army itself, its congregation was about fifty and the church took an orthodox evangelical stance at that time. However, the local Council of Churches became suspicious about the activities of the church, and consequently the name 'Baptist Church' was officially changed into 'Bugbrooke Chapel', although it was still affiliated to the Baptist Union[3]. During ten years, the Bugbrooke Chapel had made little progress: records show for example that after nearly four years of intense activities since 1957 such as Bible weeks, evangelical drives and missionary weekends, only a handful had actually joined the congregation. Noel Stanton began to search for a new way forward. He studied the Acts of the Apostles with a view to discovering what had made the early church so successful, and then he came to the realisation that 'Baptism with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 1:5) and 'speaking in tongues' (Acts 2:4) were the roots of the success of the early church.

Stanton claims that soon after the discovery, in January 1969 he experienced baptism with the Holy Sprit. After this experience, he encouraged others to speak in tongues and to accept baptism in the Spirit. The Bugbrooke Chapel changed from being an orthodox evangelical Baptist church to a Neo-Pentecostal and charismatic one experiencing the Holy Spirit[4]. It invited teachers

[3] [View of the Jesus Army, John Campbell] First I have heard of that. Do not think that is so. 'Bugbrooke Chapel' is the building; the Baptist Church in Bugbrooke is the organisation, strictly the congregation.

[4] The Charismatic movement began in America in the late 1950s, and in Britain in the early 1960s. It introduced teaching from Pentecostal denominations: about the need for believers to have a baptism in the Spirit, and to receive the gifts of the Spirit (Greek *charismata*). This teaching has spread through almost all Christian denominations, and is often called 'charismatic renewal'. It has developed chiefly amongst those holding evangelical theology (Collinson, 1998).

from the Neo-Pentecostal churches to give ministry and teaching. The Jesus Army itself describes the time:

> As 1969 opened, the fire fell! Old and young were 'baptised in the Holy Spirit' and spoke in tongues. It was electric! The experience of God was deep, joyful and life-changing. For three years a revolution burned through the church and then broke out onto the streets of Northampton. Bikers, drug-dealers, middle-class straights, and freaks found the explosive touch of God, a new life and a new lifestyle as disciples of Jesus (Flame leaflet No. 2).

The Bugbrooke Chapel grew in numbers and its members became radical New Testament Christians. They had a strict moral code, cared for one another, lived simply and sought spiritual friendships. They reached out to drug addicts, bikers and hippies with the gospel in a variety of ways. One way they reached out was by evangelism amongst the young. That was influenced by the Jesus People movements in the USA, and appealed to the counter culture of the time. Young church members rejected the middle-class aspects of church life and emphasised on reaching out to others like themselves, whereas the house church movements remained largely middle-class.

The members of the Bugbrooke Chapel became interested in the idea of a Christian community. In 1973, they decided to create a residential community and the first community house was inaugurated in 1974. It was called later the New Creation Hall, and about thirty people lived there together. In the same year, the church was officially named the Jesus Fellowship Church. By 1975 the church had a committed membership of around 250, with attendance at the weekend of around 400. Of the committed members a hundred people were living in community houses and sharing financially in the common purse. Their farm was growing and they established a health food shop and a clothing shop. Until then they had undertaken the building and maintenance works relating to community houses. Then they began to do such work commercially as well.

Further expansion occurred and more properties were purchased in the area[5]. In 1979, there were around 400 people living in the community houses. By 1981, there were 600 members in the community houses and 70 leaders. In 1982, the Jesus Fellowship Church joined the Evangelical Alliance. In 1984 the church concentrated on evangelism and adopted the name of 'the Jesus People' for that. The target of the Jesus People was to gain two hundred new members and it actually gained 175 new members. The Jesus Army itself says:

> All new members belonged to a servant group and a discipling band, as well as having a shepherd and 'caring brother' or sister. They were 'bone of our bone' and part of our 'family'. A smaller proportion fell away than is normal with more impersonal big mission evangelism. After a year some twenty per cent of our new members were not actively with us (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 211).

UK Christian Handbook notes that the Jesus Fellowship Church had 765 members and 75 ministers in 1985. Therefore, it can be said that the Jesus Army increased steadily its membership in ten years.

In 1986, only four years after joining it, the church was asked to resign from the umbrella organisation of the Evangelical Alliance. It was alleged that the church was isolationist and had poor relationships with other churches. It was also accused of breaking up families and being aggressively authoritarian[6]. The Jesus Army claims that two ex-members supported the campaign against the church and their views were distorted (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 226f). It did, however, resign from the Evangelical Alliance in 1986. Later in the same year the church was compelled to leave the Baptist Union of Great Britain on the grounds that owing to its nation wide activities and its form of government, it could no longer be recognised as a local Baptist Church.

[5] *UK Christian Handbook* notes the Jesus Fellowship Church had 431 members and 24 church households and 47 ministers in 1980.

[6] [View of the Jesus Army, John Campbell] These were not the issue of resignation and not accepted by the Evangelical Alliance.

In April 1987, the Jesus Army was set up as the evangelising arm of the Jesus Fellowship Church to mobilise outreach in towns and cities. The Jesus Army began to march into the wider arena with jackets, banners, flags, buses and guitars. They formulated their community house programme and had additional houses in Northampton, Kettering, Hastings, Hinckley, Leicester, and London. By the end of December 1987, there were 900 adults covenant members and 200 children[7].

The Jesus Army sought to improve its relationships with other churches and launched the 'Multiply Christian Network' in 1992, which is a network of independent Christian churches and groups in the UK and overseas. In 1993, in an effort to create a new image, they launched the 'modern Jesus army' in all the colours of the rainbow. They claimed that the 'modern Jesus army' aims to bring the power of the Christian gospel to the notice of many people, particularly those in need. They are recognisable on the streets by their colourful uniform jackets and badges, as well as the banners and flags used on Jesus Marches through at towns and cities. They baptise people in rivers, the sea, and even at the fountains in Trafalgar Square.

In 1995, the Jesus Army consisted of 75 church households scattered throughout the UK. The communities are called the New Creation Christian Community and are led by about 200 pastors and their trainees. In all, around 2,000 members and friends gathered regularly and attended events and services. In 1997, the Jesus Army became interested in the idea of inspiration of the early Celtic Church. It believes:

> At the outset of Christianity in Britain there was a powerful movement of God amongst the Celts. This simple, charismatic brotherhood, led by the Holy Spirit (whom they called the 'Wild Goose') gained a vast influence over the people—so much so that their searching, pagan culture was turned towards God (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 355).

[7] *UK Christian Handbook* notes the Jesus Fellowship Church had 1,260 members and 99 ministers in 1990.

The Jesus Army's aim has been to engage and give a Christian alternative as culturally relevant as the New Age movement.

The original emphasis of the Jesus Army remains today. In the 1960's, they sought out hippie drop-outs; in the 1990's they try to help drug addicts and the homeless. The Jesus Army rejoined the Evangelical Alliance in October 1999. Today there are about 2,500 members of the Jesus Army and about 700 live in the community houses.

Teachings and ethics

The Jesus Army describes itself as an orthodox evangelical and charismatic Christian church, upholding the universally accepted creeds of the Christian faith: the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed[8]. The members of the Jesus Army believe in the trinity of Almighty God: Father, Son and the Holy Spirit; in the full divinity, atoning death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ; and in the Bible as God's infallible word, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit. Most doctrine is taken from the New Testament. The Jesus Army states:

> This Church desires to witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ over and in His Church; and by holy character, righteous society and evangelical testimony to declare that Jesus Christ, Son of God, the only Saviour, is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and through Him alone can men find and enter the Kingdom of God. The Church proclaims free grace, justification by faith in Christ and the sealing and sanctifying baptism in the Holy Spirit (A leaflet entitled 'Brief Statement of Faith of the Jesus Fellowship Church').

Although there is no specific statement on eschatology, the members and leader of the Jesus Army sometimes have mentioned eschatology during the period of this research. Much attention has been given to contemporary social problems in their worship and events. The founder of the Jesus Army, Noel Stanton preached to

[8] These creeds are ancient statements of Christian faith that are accepted by Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox traditions. See *Glossary*.

the congregation of about two thousand people in the Wembley Praise Day Event held at Wembley Conference Centre on the 8th of November in 1997:

> It is hard to satisfy the needs of the soul. At the same time the Holy Spirit has been providing Christian Churches and groups with vision and compassion. In a society where there are many needs, because of injustice and evil; an awakening of faith is taking place, and people everywhere long to meet and experience God, and to find forgiveness, peace, love and acceptance. We thank God for this spiritual movement. The restlessness in this nation is the restlessness of many nations in the last days of not only this decade, but this century, and of course the millennium. If you would summarise our policy, it would probably be 4 words, 'something has to change'. Whether it is in the political line, whether it is in other areas of society there is a real unease about us, about this people, this nation, this world. Something has to change. There is this uncertainty, there is wonder as we go into the next millennium.
>
> Whether you are talking about the world population, whether you are talking about the breakdown of the values of family life, whatever the trends are we are in a decline which is unsustainable, something has to change, or we will just blow up, and it is going to change. We live in a society where there is lots of exclusion from schools, and they are growing and growing, lots of poverty, lots of racial problems, lots of unemployment, and it is all part of the disintegration of the chaos in our cities, and in this nation and elsewhere (Noel Stanton, at Wembley Conference Centre on the 8th of November in 1997).

The Jesus Army represents the Kingdom of God and the new Zion; the members believe that they are already living in the Kingdom of God and are participating in the life in the Kingdom of God as a present reality in the church, although this is not the ultimate Kingdom of God yet. The members believe that Jesus has established his rule and that Jesus is establishing the ultimate Kingdom of God. The Jesus Army campaigns against perceived social ills such as drugs, racism, homelessness and prostitution. It claims that members care for one another, live simply and seek spiritual friendships. They do not have television in their community houses. They are ethically conservative. Their ethical values will be examined in chapter six. We shall now look at their teachings and ethics in detail, starting with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, baptism and covenant

As mentioned previously, the Jesus Army has the character of the charismatic and neo-Pentecostal church and believes in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Jesus Army believes that the Holy Spirit works in four ways. First, it brings people to repentance.

> We see our evil condition before God. We are conscious of sin's grip on our minds, desires and feelings. We are aware of evil committed over the years. We realise that in God's eyes, there is nothing good in us. We are guilty of enmity against Him. We become full of shame, unable to rid ourselves of sin's guilt and power. We cry to God for mercy, confessing both our sinful nature and our many sins to Him (1 John 1:8,9). We feel a hatred of sin and a determination to turn from it. This is the Holy Spirit's first work in our lives. It is 'repentance toward God' or a sorrow over sin and a heart-cry for forgiveness. As we repent, God begins to save us and change us. (Flame leaflet No.3)

Secondly, it brings people to saving faith and a new birth.

> The Holy Spirit now turns us towards Jesus our Saviour. We know that Jesus is God become man. He shows God to us! He takes our place in judgement. We 'see' Jesus suffering and dying for us (John 10:11). We realise that He, and only He, is our Saviour. He has 'redeemed' us and cancelled our sin. God the Judge has accepted Jesus as the 'substitute', the One condemned in our place, who pays the penalty for our sin (Cor 5:21). When we 'see', we believe! We call on Jesus to save us. We have a sense of being forgiven and accepted by God. We are 'justified by faith' (Rom 4:5, 5:1,2) meaning that God, because of Jesus, declares us 'Not Guilty', crediting the perfect obedience of Jesus to us (Rom 5:19)! We are 'born again'; 'born of the Spirit' (John 3:3). We become spiritually alive! We receive eternal life (John 3:36, Rom 6:23). We are 'adopted' by the Spirit into God's family. We become His children (Rom 8:15,16). We confirm that we are saved by witnessing aloud that Jesus is our Saviour and Lord (Rom 10:9). This is the Holy Spirit's second work in our lives. It is 'saving faith', 'new birth', 'becoming God's child' or 'receiving the gift of eternal life'. (Flame leaflet No.3)

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit baptises people and washes away to bury their former nature.

> The Holy Spirit now makes us aware that, like Jesus Himself (Matt. 3:13-17), we need to be baptised by immersion in water. Unlike Him, our 'old nature' needs 'burial' (Rom 6:4). As a 'disciple', 'trainee' or 'follower' of Jesus, we must be 'baptised into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit' (Matt. 28:19). And so we are baptised into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38). We invoke

> His name and are carried under the water. Sin-power is removed from our conscience (1Pet. 3:21). Our sins are 'washed away' (Acts 22:16). We rise to a new God assures us in baptism that our old nature is dead (Rom 6:6). We believe it! And we then 'account' ourselves as 'dead to sin and alive to God' (Rom 6:11). This is the third work of the Holy Spirit. It is so closely associated with the fourth work that the two together form our 'one baptism'. They are two essential parts of our complete baptism, bringing us to a real 'belonging' to Jesus Christ (Rom 6:4). (Flame leaflet No.3)

Finally, the Holy Spirit baptises people with life and power and makes them people a church family.

> Jesus now joins us to His resurrection (Col. 2:12). He baptises us with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Matt. 3:11, Acts 1:5). God the Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask (Luke 11:13). The Holy Spirit comes as 'living waters' bubbling up within us and flowing from us (John 4:14, John 7:38,39). We are 'anointed with power' (Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8) and made holy (2 Thess. 2:13). The Holy Spirit came to the first Christians powerfully (Acts 2:1-4). They 'spoke in new tongues'. They appeared intoxicated (Acts 2:13,15). Today, as in Biblical times, people 'fall under the power'. Holy Spirit baptism can come before water baptism (Acts 10:44) or after (Acts 8:16,17) or at the same time (Acts 2:38-41, Acts 19:5,6). Speaking in tongues accompanies Holy Spirit baptism. Sometimes there is laying on of hands (Acts 8:17, Acts 19:6). The Holy Spirit brings a sense of holiness, love and power, often with tingling, shaking, laughter, joy and praise. Holy Spirit baptism makes us a church family. It causes the body-brotherhood of Jesus to be formed and to increase (1 Cor. 12:13). It makes us a people of one heart and soul (John 17:23, Acts 4:32). (Flame leaflet No.3)

The Jesus Army believes that all people need the four works of the Holy Spirit.

The Jesus Army places strong emphasis on the covenant bond and most of the members are in a membership covenant. This covenant, like those made between people in the Bible, is made before God and is regarded as unbreakable. Members agree to be bonded with one another and to work out the implications of such a pledge of brotherly love. They see the covenant working in three ways. A leaflet of the Jesus Army says:

> 1. God covenants to be the Almighty Father to us as a Christian church. (2 Cor. 6:16)
> 2. We covenant with God to be His people, 'a church of the living God'. (1 Tim. 3:15)
> 3. We covenant to belong together, love one another and be Christ's

church together. (John 13:34).
(Flame leaflet No. 12).

Members of the Jesus Army promise never to let one another down; to help one another through difficulties; to forgive and encourage one another; to fight together to save sinners with the gospel; to share in sufferings and disappointments; to build strong brotherhood relationships and to find themselves. This covenant of brotherhood is claimed to be one of the strengths of the Jesus Army.

The membership covenant of the Jesus Army has seven parts to the covenant bond:

> 1. Holding the Faith: belief in the Christian faith expressed in the Bible.
> 2. The holy brotherhood church: love and loyalty for the holy brotherhood-church that God has called us to be.
> 3. Consecration and service: commitment to holy living and service for building Christ's church.
> 4. The community life of God's people: to love one another in equality, simplicity and righteousness.
> 5. Suffering with Christ: to stand firm in the face of opposition and love our enemies.
> 6. Discipling, accountability and discipline: to accept wisdom and help from other members, with mutual correction, confession of faults, forgiveness and reconciliation.
> 7. The bond of covenant: a pledge of oneness and an intention of lifelong commitment to the Jesus Fellowship. (Flame leaflet No. 12).

New covenant members are received into the Jesus Fellowship through baptism in water, if not already baptised as an adult believer, and make a covenant with God.

The founder of the Jesus Army, Noel Stanton says:

> Throughout the UK, Jesus Army leaders and members are baptising. We give them careful instruction as to how to do this and the wording to be used (this wording includes all the formulae found in the New Testament). They baptise in mill ponds, brooks, streams, rivers, lakes, the sea – as well as baths and chapel or portable baptistries! ('Jesus Life', No. 45 Third Quarter 1998: 3).

Horatio, a style 3 member, talks about his experience of baptism:

> I was full of energy, full of joy and very happy. I came here and four days after I got baptised. I was so happy to be able to forget whatever I had done in the past and just be able to start something new. I remember at my baptism, I was jumping on the water and shouting. I was so happy. I was full of joy inside, because I was saved and the Holy Spirit had touched me. You need to see it yourself to understand it.

> But something happens to you in that water during Baptism that changes your life. I remember I was full of joy for two weeks. I was not on drugs; it was the Holy Spirit that touched my heart and my mind. I was very happy and excited. It really changed my life (J21).

Helen, a 30-year-old style 1 member, also talks of baptism and the Holy Spirit:

> When you get baptised you are born again in Jesus and that automatically changes you. But that is like a personal choice that you make. You choose that way of life. I wanted to get baptised. Now my heart has changed, so now I want to come here as often as I do. It is Jesus that has changed it all. Jesus made me change really. It is only God really, because you find more of the Holy Spirit and what he can do in your life (J22).

Those who want to become a covenant member say, 'Before God I do so make covenant in Jesus' Name.' The members wash the feet of new covenant members as a sign of the covenant (John 13:14,15). There are different styles of covenant membership with different levels of commitment (Flame leaflet No.1):

- Style 1 covenant members have been baptised by immersion and join in a heart-to-heart covenant relationship. They are often those who are spiritually 'young' in Jesus and cannot yet handle a stronger commitment. Others are 'Style One' because of their circumstances. 'Style One Members' normally attend the Tuesday evening Agape meal and weekend meetings of the church household and congregation.
- Style 2 covenant members resemble style 1; except they have a stronger commitment. This includes a recognition of the radical nature of Kingdom of God culture, with time, financial and serving commitments. It is for those who retain their own house and lifestyle but who are keen to live in simplicity, discipleship and sharing.
- Style 3 covenant members have a much stronger commitment; they see the Kingdom of God in the church and desire the church family to be a community over which Jesus is Lord. They live in the community houses and share wealth, possessions and income.
- Style 4 covenant members resemble style 1, except they live at a distance from any Jesus Army congregation, so cannot regularly participate.

There is also the non-covenant style of membership, into which the majority of members enter initially.

Gender, marriage and celibacy

Leaders of community houses are usually men. The authority in the Jesus Army is predominantly male. The Jesus Army explains:

> The Bible tells us how mankind began with the creation of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:7-23). God made Adam from the dust. But Adam needed a helper. So, God put Adam to sleep and formed Eve from one of his ribs. We read that 'man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man' (1 Cor. 11:8). Adam was created first and given responsibility by God. Eve was formed to help and support Adam. God's order was established. If we argue with that, we argue with God! (1 Tim. 2:13) (Flame leaflet No.10).

The members think that men and women have different roles and consequently they take care of their appearance and dress. Generally, female members avoid short hair cuts and wearing trousers. They try to dress simply and modestly. They say 'Better to spend time in prayer, or serving, than in front of the mirror making up our faces' (Flame leaflet No. 10). Jean, a 45-year-old style 2 member, talks about female members' dress:

> I feel it is decent, and tells men that we are godly women, and also it allows us to sit anywhere with ease and discretion. We do not have our hair as short as men, I feel that we show we are female right down to our toes. We do everything in a feminine way, and likewise the men demonstrate absolute masculinity, so in that way I feel we are in perfect balance (J8).

Richard in his forties, one of the leaders in the Jesus Army in London, is opposed to the view that female members are exploited in the Jesus Army. He says:

> We respect our women in the church very tremendously. We see that they have the capability of the leadership role, but obviously there is a distinction in terms of what the New Testament teaches. It teaches that there is a distinction, for instance, the Apostles were all male. In a marriage, it is not a woman but a man who loves his wife, honours her and takes care of her, as the weaker sex. It is clear from the Scriptures that the woman is the weaker sex, but it is also clear from the New Testament that there is also equality in terms of our spiritual life, so that there will come a day, in fact when there is no marriage, there is no sexual activity, and there is no dividing in terms of the sexes, male or female (J9).

Nevertheless, he puts emphasis on female members' dress:

> The way they dress, with their long skirts and so forth, bless them. They can look nice; they don't have to look drab and dreary. But of course the way of worldly fashion is something that we don't need to compete with. Our sisters don't need the latest high heeled shoes particularly; they can make do with something presentable and simple. They should not show off their bodies (J9).

Richard pointed out two reasons for the female modest dress. First, females look more feminine. Second, immodest dress could be tempting to some male members in the obvious ways and he thinks that is something best to avoid.

As we have seen, there are four styles of covenant membership, and members of style 3 live in community houses. Richard lives in a community house with his wife and five children. He explains the community life-style:

> We have a little rule in the house that it is better to avoid wearing trousers and things for sisters. I won't walk round the house with my shirt off. I would avoid wandering around the house immodestly dressed. On the other hand, there are other brothers and sisters who live outside the community houses, and they can dress how they really want to. I would not tell them not to wear trousers. In fact, some of our sisters do wear jeans, so people can decide what they wear for themselves (J9).

Richard' s wife, Verona, says, 'Before God we are equal, but we have different roles. Basically, we follow what the Bible says. Christ is the authority over men and men are the authority over women. Of course, we all have our place and we all have a very important part to play' (J20). Verona believes that God knows best and that God has reasons for giving men the authority over women. Regarding female members' dress, she says:

> The reason we dress like we dress is because we are women and we want to look feminine. The way the men dress is because they are men and they want to look like men. We have lots of ladies around who wear trousers. But basically, you can't tell them to wear a skirt, because it is up to them. You have to know before God what you want to do (J20).

When Verona first came to the Jesus Army, she wore trousers for a long time and nobody told her to wear a skirt. Then, she just felt that she would be more feminine if she wore a skirt, and she stopped wearing trousers. She still sometimes wears

trousers, when she goes camping with her children. Nevertheless, she states, 'Normally speaking, I like to look feminine' (J20).

On the other hand, a female member says,

> I don't like the idea that sisters [female members] don't wear trousers. That is a superficial thing. God looks at the heart; God does not look at what you wear. I see that as legalistic, having a bee in your bonnet. Personally, I wear trousers occasionally (J23).

Regarding the male authority over women, some female members seem to have a different view from Verona. Moira, a 20-year-old style 1 member, does not mind the male authority over women at all, but she says:

> I have noticed that as women get older they seem to mind more. As I look at sisters who are older, they seem to be more frustrated about it. Personally, I feel free to express my opinion. In our house, the leaders are quite good in that way. If a woman has something to say, they will listen. I feel free to say what I want. I don't mind (J15).

The Jesus Army considers that marriage and family life are essential to stable society (Flame leaflet No.8), but they have become devalued in society, often due to the pressures of modern life. The Jesus Army believes that successful marriage depends on a commitment to follow God, and to 'seek first His Kingdom'. Marriage is regarded as a covenant relationship of life-long loyalty, first with Jesus and the community, then with one another:

> God intends husbands to carry the main authority in marriage and parenthood and to lead in godliness . . . They find a holy manliness and carry vision, determination and motivation with meekness and compassion. Wives can trust a godly man. Any bossiness, sentimentality, manipulation and small mindedness is surrendered to the 'blood of Jesus' and husbands and wives love one another with respect for one another in a faithful relationship (Flame leaflet No.8).

Among members in the community houses, single men and women are carefully segregated. I ate lunch together in their community houses many times and found that men and women ate lunch at different tables. There are also carefully controlled arrangements for marriage. Richard says:

> Before I met my wife, I realised there were two different gifts: marriage and celibacy. I didn't get acquainted with my wife too quickly. I took it very slowly and I kept my distance, because I wanted to be open to

> doing what God wanted me to do in terms of my ministry. I felt that God was opening the door for me to be married, and then I realised that marriage would be helpful to my ministry, my evangelism ministry, shepherding ministry, and also in many ways, just having that partner as well. It has worked that way, I do believe that being married has brought a stability to my life (J9).

Within marriage, sexual intercourse is primarily for procreation.

Nearly 300 men and women are committed to celibacy: staying single for Jesus. Celibate members are regarded as a mobile army able to pioneer and plant new churches with flexibility. They are believed to possess a prophetic clarity in bringing God's direction to the church. It is believed that celibacy builds close relationships and opens new opportunities. The Jesus Army claims that celibates can explore the great potential of life in Jesus:

> Jesus is the great role model. As a celibate, He was a complete human being. He had deep relationships with friends and disciples but found his ultimate satisfaction in loving the Father. He knew all human emotions and temptations. His celibate large-heartedness was creative - not restrictive. His pure and undivided life has inspired multitudes. Effective New Testament men such as Paul and others were celibate (1 Cor. 7:7). Consider this! In the New Testament it is said there are 820 words concerning celibacy and staying single for the Lord and 1,370 dealing with marriage. This ratio should be reflected in church life. Christianity must not swallow the dangerous myth that fulfilment means sexual fulfilment with marriage as the expected norm. Single people must not be patronised or excluded. They are essential! (Flame leaflet No.9).

This teaching influences the members' life. Indeed, there are many single members in the Jesus Army[9].

Those who are considering the call to celibacy are urged to have a probationary year before making a lifelong commitment sealed with a covenant declaration. Others may choose to be committed to the single state for a period, for example, of five years. No one is allowed to make a full commitment to celibacy until the age of 21, although they may consider any years prior to this as 'committed

[9] We shall look at the findings from the questionnaire survey in chapter five.

to celibacy' in probationary terms. There are special meetings such as 'Celibates Gathering', which is for celibates, probationary celibates and anyone interested in learning to be single for Jesus.

Practices and activities

In this section, we shall look at worship and festivals, evangelisation, and businesses of the Jesus Army[10]. We shall begin with worship and festivals.

Worship and festivals

The main act of worship takes place on Sundays, and includes Bible teaching, communion, dancing and the singing hymns and songs. Congregations are normally between fifty and two hundred people (around seventy in London). On Tuesday evenings, there is an 'Agape' meal in community houses, during which Communion bread and wine are taken.

The Jesus Army has also national gatherings called 'Celebrations' such as 'The Wembley Praise Day'. The Wembley Praise Day is held annually at Wembley conference centre and non-members are also welcome to this event; a series of evangelistic talks is given throughout the day by some visitors from other churches with similar beliefs. 'Celebrate Jesus' events normally held on Saturdays and Sundays are also national events. They bring inspiration with 'Big Praise' and prophetic direction and give members who do not live in Northampton the opportunity of meeting members from the rest of the church, hearing Noel Stanton preach, and taking part in a large Christian celebration worship event.

During special worship, Noel Stanton leads the members into speaking in tongues, so does Steve Calam, a leader in London during Sunday worship. The

[10] 'Spying in Guru Land' written by William Shaw (1995), who was involved with the Jesus Army for a while for the purpose of writing about it, describes the activities in the Jesus Army graphically with a journalistic view.

members close their eyes and start speaking in strange and unrecognisable languages. Some members just repeat 'Jesus, Lord'. Their glossolalias seem to be stereotyped among them and it may be interpreted that speaking in tongues is learned behaviour, associated with initiation into the Jesus Army. However, they are said to be in the Holy Spirit.

The Jesus Army does not hold any particular holy days and members do not celebrate Christmas, which is regarded as pagan in origin or motivated by consumerism. The life in community houses has been simple since the first community house was set up in 1974:

> We took a newspaper, but there was no place for television or radio in our community houses. We didn't go out for our entertainment either. There was enough at home! Some of us became more creative, learning instruments, and writing poems or journals (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 103).

The members of the Jesus Army live simply. However, they are not entirely opposed to technology. They have adopted modern dance music, house music, and drum machines. Moreover, they have developed media technology used film, video-graphics, computerised music, sound and lighting for their worship. The Jesus Army describes it:

> At clubs and festivals we noted the tremendous influence of music. If music communicated so powerfully, then maybe God was calling us to speak in its language. Everywhere we saw the instinct to worship. Whether dancing before a totem pole or raving the night away on ecstasy, people wanted to abandon themselves in a group experience akin to worship. The present culture was also highly visual. Pictures speak more than words and even books were becoming outdated in a world of videos and high tech computers. God communicated visually; through creation, and in water baptism, oil and wine. Christianity was full of visual symbols (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 311).

The aim of their presentations is to communicate the gospel effectively. Members believe that their multimedia events, using video-graphic, film, sound, and light displays give 'powerful images showing the beauty of creation and its devastation; sights that capture the desperate need of humanity; songs that speak of God's love;

colourful celebrations of a new brotherhood' (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 311).

Drusilla, a style 2 member, says:

> The Holy Spirit has inspired us to have lights, to play Reggae-style Christian music, or Rock-style music, but it is from a Christian heart, and the Holy Spirit is in it. Why should Satan have all the good music? Jesus wants us to be free to express ourselves, and to express His love. It is good; it makes you feel good to dance (J3).

The Jesus Army claims that such joyous worship is in the tradition of Old Testament worship, and that its aim is to communicate with people in contemporary culture by using contemporary media.

Evangelisation

The slogans 'Love, Power and Sacrifice' and 'We will fight for YOU' and the combat jackets with pattern of the camouflage and bright colours give the impression that the evangelism of the Jesus Army is aggressive. The Jesus Army travels around the UK in converted double-decker buses for the purpose of evangelism. The members put up a marquee in an area for about a week and hold evangelistic meetings in the evenings.

There are various types of evangelical campaigns. Servant Groups visit non-members who have displayed an interest in the Jesus Army or have requested help. Once a month the Jesus Army runs four-day EDP (Eat, Drink, Pray) in London. They walk the streets for a few hours befriending night-clubbers and the homeless. At intervals they return to their bus at Trafalgar Square, sit newcomers down with a cup of tea and provide them with a hot meal. And if people want to know about Jesus, they talk about him, too. EDP therefore can be seen as a way of evangelisation.

Servant Groups are an essential part of the network of faith and friendship of the Jesus Army. Servant Groups comprise about four adult members. Each

Servant Group also includes 'new friends'[11]. These may be visitors staying in the Jesus Army's community houses or people who have shown an interest in the Jesus Army. Servant Groups meet regularly on Wednesday evenings, and may have activities at other times, too. The Jesus Army itself says, Servant Groups go 'wherever people are hungry for the gospel: on the streets, in the parks, on the beaches, in pubs and clubs, in bedsits, flats and houses' (Flame leaflet No. 15). Servant Groups meet in community houses, the homes of members, or if they are agreeable to it, the houses of 'new friends'. In towns and cities throughout the UK these group are actively supporting community houses and new church plantings. At meetings the groups worship, pray, give testimonies, and encourage each other. Praying for one another's specific needs is an important activity for them. New members are socialised in these Servant Groups. The Jesus Army believes God uses Servant Groups to bring salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing of soul and body, deliverance and anointment to many people (Flame leaflet No. 15). The Jesus Army has around 300 of these groups.

Another method of evangelising used by the Jesus Army is the written word. It issues a magazine 'Jesus Life' quarterly (over 15,000 copies), and a paper 'Streetpaper' quarterly (between 80,000 and 100,000 copies). They include information on coming events and conversion stories of existing members, with the aim of bringing in new members. 'Jesus Life' and 'Streetpaper' are handed out by proselytising members to people in the streets, or left in public places such as libraries. Some of the members first encountered the Jesus Army through these publications. The Jesus Army has its own website on the Internet as well. It includes the locations of congregations and community houses, information on coming events and conversion stories of existing members which have appeared in

[11] New Friends: The Jesus Army explains 'They come to our meetings and our houses, find friendship among us and meet Jesus. We love them! They are so welcome! We're looking forward to meeting many more of them in these days when the Jesus Movement is growing around the land' (Flame leaflet No.1).

'Jesus Life' and 'Streetpaper'. We shall look at the findings from the questionnaire survey relating to members' first encounter and conversion in chapter five.

In 1995, the Jesus Army started 'Ignition UK Gospel Roadshow' to evangelise people. The leaflet says:

> All over the UK, we have a grass roots Jesus Movement. All kinds of churches are involved. Because it's lively, colourful, loving and powerful, it's been called 'a people's movement of new Christians'. The Ignition UK Gospel Roadshow will give you an intro. Feel free to come on the coach, have a drink and a chat, watch the video and make friends. If you'd like us to, we can pray for you. God will help any of us! (A leaflet, 'Ignition UK Gospel Roadshow').

The 'Ignition' started in 1995 in Wales, South England and London. The following year took it to the Midlands and the North of England. The final phase in 1997 began in the North of Endland, stretched up to Scotland and ended in Dublin.

> We're all worried about the state of things. Family breakdown, unemployment, debt, drugs, violence, etc. We're lonely, fearful, hurting, needing to feel forgiven and loved, to know who we are and what life is all about. Well, let's help one another!
> Through ignition we'll meet people and love them. We'll pray and bring the touch of God to people and locations. We'll help people to know Jesus Christ, their Saviour and Friend. Feel included. The Ignition team love everyone!
> God Bless you, (A leaflet, 'Ignition UK Gospel Roadshow').

During the three-years 'Ignition', the team members prayed with thousands of people and gave out 400,000 Jesus Army Street papers, 30,000 Jesus Life Magazines and 5,000 necklaces with a red cross. The coach team travelled 20,000 miles and visited 200 towns and cities in the UK (Jesus Life Magazine, No. 43, 1st Quarter 1998, page 22).

Anne, a 32-year-old style 1 member, talks about the reason why she evangelises:

> I feel I have found what people are looking for without realising, and I feel that I have something to give. I want to tell people about what I have found, because I know Jesus is the way. You can try the drugs, drink, and relationships. You can get money, fame, whatever and it doesn't satisfy you. There will always be a void in you. Only God can meet that void and cover that gap (J27).

Helen, a 30-year-old style 1 member, also talks about the reason why she evangelises:

> I think that there are two ways in life. There is the way that the majority of people live where they serve themselves, and then there is the other way of life where you serve Jesus. I want to help people to see the other way. If they see the other way and choose not to take that way, that is fine. But they should know about the other way. I didn't know about the other way, so I got told about it and learnt about it. Then, I had two options and I could choose either, and I chose Jesus. A lot of people in the world only think there is one option, so that is all they do. If you tell them about the second one then they have two choices and they can choose whichever one they want. That is why I tell people about it to give them the choice, help them to see that there are other choices in life (J22).

Both Anne and Helen talked about the alternative way of life with God and Jesus. They claim that they evangelise people in order to get them to know the way and give the choice. Horatio, a style 3 member, talks about his way of evangelising:

> I don't stand on top of a chair and tell people they are sinners. I try to make friends. I sit down with the people on the street, and I try to understand their point of view. First I build up the friendship. Once you have made friends, then you tell them that Jesus can change their life and that he loves them. The first thing for me is to make friends. It is not just with the homeless, of course, it is with everyone. You are always trying to make a friendship before telling them about the Gospel and about Jesus (J21).

Verona, a 43-year-old style 3 member elaborates on that:

> My aim in life is to make friends with people, to meet them at their level, to help them over any problems, to show them that in Jesus they can find help, and to show them they can find a friend in Jesus. That is why we invite people to come around to our Fellowship and have a drink or a meal. Basically in the end the most important thing is for people to come to know Jesus and to find him to help them in their situations. To find eternal life in Jesus. That is the most important thing. It doesn't really matter what church they go to. It is up to them. If they feel they would like to come around and they feel at home here and they would like to join us in our worship, then that is fine. They are welcome. I think that is between them and God to decide which church they go to (J20).

We may say that their evangelisations are not coercive despite the aggressive impression which is derived from the slogans of 'Love, Power and Sacrifice' and 'We will fight for YOU' and the combat jackets.

The Jesus Army considers that much of modern UK Christianity lacks truly multi-racial churches:

> We must show society that the church of Jesus removes 'dividing walls of hostility' (Eph 2:14) between 'tribes and tongues'. The church must be a living demonstration of the harmony of races provided by Jesus. In the Jesus Fellowship we are seeking to forge a fellowship free from prejudice. We have had to ask forgiveness for European superiority and ask God to change deep-seated attitudes of rejection towards other races and peoples. We often live with brothers and sisters from a variety of racial backgrounds. Differences of climate, food, dress and customs all create opportunities for us to show the love that 'is patient and kind . . . is not arrogant . . . does not insist on its own way . . . bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things' (1 Cor. 13:4-7). The compassionate love of the Cross, often gained painfully and slowly through mistakes and misunderstandings, breaks through natural barriers (Flame leaflet No. 23).

The Jesus Army sought to improve relationships with other churches and launched 'Multiply Christian Network' in 1992. It is a network of independent Christian churches and groups in the UK and overseas. It is also a member of the Evangelical Alliance which has international partners in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Australia, Ghana, Kenya, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Nigeria and the USA.

Businesses

The Jesus Army runs several businesses. Apart from the farming of over 400 acres, there are various businesses such as 'Goodness Foods' and 'Skaino Services'. 'Goodness Foods' is part of the holding company 'House of Goodness Ltd' started in 1976 and is trading in wholefoods, organic foods, health foods and healthy snacks and cakes. The manager Ed Hunt says, 'People perceive us to be a very ethical, honest company and straightforward to deal with. . . . We do not try to influence our customers in their faith in any way. They just benefit from our ethics'

(A Health Food Business report by Tracey Cooke in 1999). 'Skaino Services[12]' provides a wide range of services: building, plumbing, painting, heating, vehicle repairs and gardening. Newell (1997: 131) points out, 'This kind of firm is particularly suited to the working class male youths attracted by JF [the Jesus Fellowship], who are thus given skills training and vocational rehabilitation.' Those who work in these businesses are all paid the same.

The businesses of the Jesus Army provide paid employment for those who were previously unemployed, and also provide limited opportunities for others to work on a temporary and voluntary basis. Such work is often of a therapeutic or work experience nature. According to the Jesus Army, their businesses are 'all part of kingdom life. It was inevitable that the vision of being a "kingdom people" would affect our everyday work-life. Businesses support our ministries and provide an atmosphere of discipleship' (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 200). The members bring their commitment and brotherhood right into daily work.

We shall now examine their constitution starting with authority.

Authority

When it comes to the features of founders of NRMs, Weber's sociological concept of charismatic authority has been analysed and interpreted by sociologists (e.g. Wilson, 1975; Bird, 1978; Wallis & Bruce, 1986; Nelson, 1987; Bird, 1993; Puttick, 1994). When the Jesus Army describes itself as 'a charismatic church', it is not using the term in the Weberian sense, and the meaning is different from Weber's concept of charisma. The classic statement of charisma by Weber is:

> the term 'charisma' will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or

[12] Skaino is given by the movement s the Greek for 'tentmaking'.

> as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a 'leader' (1978: 241).

The essence of charisma is a relationship based on faith in claim to supernatural power. Wilson states:

> Charisma denotes a quality not of the individual, but of a relationship between believers (or followers) and the man in whom they believed. His claim, or theirs on his behalf, was that he had authority because of his supernatural competences. Charisma is not a personality attribute, but a successful claim to power by virtue of supernatural ordination (1975: 7).

The leader of the Jesus Army is Noel Stanton who has dedicated his life to God as a celibate. Stanton is believed to be a medium of prophecy provided by the Holy Spirit and guided by God. 'Prophecy' in the Jesus Army is not in the sense of foretelling the future, but in the sense of proclaiming the way of God, much of which is already made clear through the Bible.

Noel Stanton was born in 1926 and grew up on his parents' farm in Bedfordshire. On leaving school he worked for a bank, but at eighteen he was conscripted into the Royal Navy. After service in the Navy, he attended the non-denominational All Nations Bible College and for a while acted as deputation secretary for what was then the West Amazon Mission. Returning to Bedford, Stanton worked as an accountant and later became a director of a greeting cards company, whilst he continued to evangelise and set his heart on a pastoral ministry. In 1957 he was inducted as pastor of the Baptist church at Bugbrooke, Northampton.

Stanton claims that in 1969 he experienced Baptism in the Holy Sprit. After this charismatic experience, he encouraged others to speak in tongues and to accept baptism in the Spirit.

> Noel's ministry became more inspirational. The Spirit had opened up whole new horizons and he was learning as fast as he could. He was glad to listen to . . . anybody who could help. Slowly he was finding his feet and developing a distinctive ministry (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 37).

Stanton was ready to listen to others' opinions and worked with other members. When the church started the community, Stanton remained the undisputed leader of the group.

In the 1980s, Stanton's ministry became visionary and strong. He established his strong authority in the Jesus Army.

> He [Stanton] could be stern and perfectionist, but he was an inspiring leader. Not one public meeting had he missed for years. Through sickness and loneliness, through opposition and disloyalty, he had endured. He stood rocklike, visionary and devoted, knowing well that the tide in Britain could only be turned by sacrifice and guts (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 193).

Stanton is over seventy years old now, but his ministry maintains a strong and united vision. Stanton says:

> Our governing body these days is a Senior Leadership of around seventeen men of whom I'm the eldest. Most of them are in their forties, so I don't think there's much difficulty in the vision continuing. We've grown together, lived together and worked out many things together over many years and the vision is well established in our hearts. At the same time, we are continually training new leaders. We have over 200 men in pastoral leadership and as many again in some stage of leadership training. Of course in the end one realises that God had got it all in hand anyway. I'm not a General Booth! I've not written down my successor's name. It will all be dealt with in the Spirit (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 365).

Liam has known Stanton for over 20 years, and particularly over the last four or five years. As one of the senior leaders in the Jesus Army he has had constant dealings with Stanton. Liam says:

> For me he has always been a tremendous inspiration and example as a man of God, who has brought us the direction of God over the last 30 years. He is a constant challenge, a provocation, an inspiration and a reassurance. He is a bit of a father figure to many of us, but he is also a fiery prophet. He gives me a lot of training in terms of becoming a man of God myself. I admire him enormously and feel he is God's man who has raised up this church and has led it through many difficult times over the last 30 years. I follow him. I am aware of his faults and his limitations and weaknesses, but I look upon him as a man that God has raised up for a job. I follow in his footsteps. He has shaped the church (J13).

Liam considers Stanton to be a man raised up by God.

Verona is the wife of Richard who is one of the leaders in the community in London. For her, Stanton is two things. First, Noel Stanton is like a father to Verona. She says:

> I knew him fairly closely at one time, because Richard [her husband] lived at the farm [the community in Northampton] and he lived at the farm also. He used to treat me like a daughter and Richard was like a son to him. In fact he helped Richard in his spiritual life quite a lot in the early years and was a real father to him, because Richard didn't have much of a fatherly influence in his younger years. Noel helped him a lot in that area and I suppose brought a lot of stability to him. In a way, because I was going to marry Richard, Noel was like a father figure to me as well. I would see him around the farm and we would sit and chat (J20).

Secondly, for her Stanton is a teacher. She says:

> He is somebody who is close to God and he has the welfare of the church in his heart. He really wants to see people being helped out of their situations in the world - bad backgrounds. Basically he wants to see people come to know Jesus. People from any background. He has got such a love for people and he wants to see people saved basically, to come to know God as a friend, to know Jesus in their life. He wants to see God's church being increased all around the country. He has that burning desire. He brings the word God gives him. He is very enthusiastic to bring it (J20).

Liam and Verona, who personally know Stanton well, respect and admire him. Stanton is considered to be a teacher who is accurate in discerning the will of God and is adored as a dependable father.

On the other hand, those members who do not know Stanton personally see him differently. Horatio lives in one of the community houses in London where Steve is a pastor and leader. Horatio considers Steve as his spiritual teacher but at the same time as a brother. He says 'Of course he is our pastor and he has spiritual strength and experience through years of being in the [residential] community and in the church, but he is a good friend' (J21). Horatio sees Stanton as the same as Steve:

> I don't see him [Noel Stanton] very much, but he is the same thing. When we have meetings together he always tells us not to be afraid to go and talk to him because he is our brother and he is here to help. He tells us he loves us as we love him. He brings us inspiration all of the

time. I don't have much relationship with him because I am living in London and he lives in Northampton. He is a person who is always willing to encourage you and help you and give advice (J21).

Helen does not know Stanton personally, either. She says:

> He is the leader of the church. He is a teacher. He is an Apostle. To me he is all of those things, but I don't know Noel. I trust him, but I don't know him. I have never had a chat with him. To me he is the leader of the church who is one of many of her leaders. He is there, but I feel very secure that there are also a lot of other people at the top. It is not just one man at the top and if he fell away from God the whole thing would fall apart. There are a lot of people there to keep the whole thing solid and together (J22).

Although Helen believes that Stanton is guided by God, she believes that other senior members in the Jesus Army possess the same gifts from God. In that sense, Stanton is not an indispensable person for Helen.

John Campbell, a spokesman of the Jesus Army says 'I think he has the ability to listen to a lot of people. Flexibility is very important.' He talks about Stanton:

> When he became minister of the chapel he was already a partner in a small business, which meant that he didn't need to give all of his time to the chapel. That probably influenced his outlook on life because being involved in running a business gives you a sense that if you are going to succeed you have to make sure that you do. It gives you a sense that your future is in your own hands. If you are going to make a profit it is because you have looked at everything and maximised your incomings and minimised your outgoings. You look at your stock and staff and you are thorough. I think that has to a large extent influenced his approach to the church. He is a very thorough person. Obviously when the church was smaller he had to be responsible for many things himself. But now that we have grown, the responsibilities have changed into training others and making sure that they achieve. There are two sides to his personality. One is looking at the church as a whole and seeing things which are overriding principles, making the church what it is. And the other side is as an individual. He has the ability to see the individual within the whole (Interview at the Jesus Fellowship Church Central Offices in Northampton on 19th of August, 1998).

Noel Stanton still seems to have a strong leadership in the Jesus Army. The message which he preaches is not his own but it is believed to be God's message that he faithfully receives. His leadership does not legitimatise autocracy.

Each member is considered to possess a spiritual gift and Stanton is glad to listen to other members. Decisions are made corporately by senior male leaders, taking into accounts any revelations made by members. The senior members are responsible for 'shepherding'. In the Jesus Army, being an elder means continuous responsibility. They are looked up to as examples of godliness. The shepherds learned to cast themselves on the Lord (Cooper & Farrant, 1997: 96). The leadership and authority is in the hands of the male elders. Each of the members belongs to a Servant Group, and has a 'shepherd' and a caring brother or sister to whom they are encouraged to turn for guidance. Long-term close care is given by integrating them into the commitment to the Jesus Army.

Residential community

The Jesus Army has two community houses in London named 'Battle centre' and 'Spreading Flame'. Each community house consists of two large redbrick Victorian houses joined by a corridor. Four houses were combined into two houses. A total of about forty members live there together. The Jesus Army calls this kind of community houses 'the New Creation Christian Community'. Approximately 700 members live in the community houses in about fifty houses around the UK. Each community house contains anything between six and sixty people, who live as a 'family'. The members of the Jesus Army consider themselves as members of a big family:

> One of the chief characteristics of this family, the church, is love. The Holy Spirit pours God's love into our hearts (Rom. 5:5). Jesus said that His new commandment was 'love one another' (John 13:34,35). As a result the first Christians formed a devoted family together. So have we! (Flame leaflet No.1).

In the Jesus Army, they call men brothers and women sisters. They believe:

> Not only must we be loyal, we must be life giving too; caring and sharing, encouraging and honouring, feeling a joy in our brother or sister. Devotion and holy pride bond us to one another. This is the family oneness, for which Jesus prayed, the 'oneness of heart and soul' (Acts 4:32) which marked the first Christians (Flame leaflet No. 17).

The finances of the Jesus Army are divided into two parts. The church side, which is charitable, deals with normal 'church' expenses, such as the expenses connected with church services, etc. It is financed through members' donations, as is normal in churches. Generally speaking, no appeals are made for money. Collections are sometimes taken at meetings, but they are totally voluntary. The businesses, community houses and other assets of the community houses are vested in a legally constituted non-charitable Trust Fund, which holds them on trust for the members. Each year the accounts are audited by a national firm of accountants and presented to the Annual General Meeting.

Financially all members are on an equal footing, with no privileges or extra financial incentives being accorded to anyone, including the leaders. The assets of the community houses consist solely of the houses they live in, the vehicles they drive, and the stock and goodwill of the businesses that they operate to provide employment for members. Within the community houses, each house has a 'common purse' arrangement, with members pooling their income to meet their personal and household expenses.

Not only do they have a common purse but they also share possessions in accordance with Acts 2; 44, 45; Acts 4: 32-35 and Luke 12: 33. The Jesus Army explains:

> [The life in community houses] is the result of the Holy Spirit's presence. We have power to love! Power to serve! Power to share! We're able to break the mould. To escape from the rut. The question we ask is 'How does God want us to live?' Of course it's to love. Of course it's to share. Of course it's to show that through new life in Jesus He brings into being a new way of living! (Flame leaflet No.7).

Their food, clothing and other household goods are ordered centrally by the Community's Food Distribution Centre (FDC) and then purchased by the various households according to their actual needs. The food is simple and the clothing is modest.

Before embarking on full membership of community houses there is a probationary period of between one and two years (which must extend at least up to

the age of 21), during which time members are 'Associate Members' of the Trust. After this, members contribute their capital to the Trust and become full 'Contributing Members'. In many cases new members have no assets, or even have debts which the Trust pays off. If they should later wish to withdraw from membership of the community houses, they are eligible for a refund of this capital contribution. Some of those who decide to withdraw continue to take an active part in church activities; others may join another church. The Jesus Army states that almost all remain in warm contact with friends in the Jesus Army.

The community houses are open, receiving many hundreds of visitors and guests every year on a temporary basis for up to six months (which can in certain circumstances be extended to up to 12 months). If their stay is longer than a week, they would pay a small board and lodging charge, but the remainder of their income is entirely at their disposal.

Communal living requires discipline and it is sustained by authority. Wilson (1976: 77) describes, 'A new language made apparent the significance of group reinforcement for the individual's own experience, and the community became the only context and the only criterion by which to define reality.' Each community house is headed by male elders. Although leaders take account of opinions of members, decision-making is hierarchic. Stanton and senior leaders decide the direction for the Jesus Army, and leaders in each community house follow the direction and make decisions on things in its community house.

Discussion

Although the Jesus Army itself claims that it is not new in terms of doctrines and practices, the Jesus Army is sociologically classed as an NRM on historical grounds, having emerged since the end of the Second World War. It has sometimes been criticised by the mass media and Anti-Cult Movements, and its radical Christian doctrine, communal living, aggressive evangelism,

authoritarianism and male leadership give it the appearance of being out of step in modern secular Britain. Some suggest that the Jesus Army is ensnaring the young and the vulnerable into a cult rather than helping people. It is alleged that it takes away an individual's ability to make choices and he or she cannot express his or her own opinions. Family Action Information Resource (FAIR) has warned of the dangers of the Jesus Army:

> Targeting the vulnerable (drug addicts, alcoholics etc.) may lead to exchanging their addictions for a strong dependency on the Jesus Fellowship. Great pressure to enter into full commitment. Fear of 'loss of salvation' on leaving the group. This fear keeps some members in the movement despite their wish to get out. Exclusivity: joining other churches means backsliding and 'breaking the life covenant'. Shepherding discourages any form of decision making, questioning and self-evaluation. Estrangement from relatives, friends and even spouses who are critical of the Jesus Fellowship. Authoritarian leadership. (FAIR Information Sheet)

There are accusations that in the community houses there is a potential for breaking up families by separating those who have joined from families who are outside. In response to those accusations, Noel Stanton states:

> In community houses we must have holiness, standards, discipline. Most people coming off the streets come to appreciate the need for that. A right authority gives security. Some, of course, can't cope with the disciplines and move elsewhere.
>
> Obviously we are keen to help the poor and needy -- that's biblical, after all. Many are helped on their way in life, often breaking with various addictions and gaining confidence while they are with us. Society benefits from this kind of help. A number have real conversion experiences but relatively few will actually join us.
>
> Our members generally maintain good loving contact with their families and visit them regularly, but, as Jesus taught, the gospel does bring tensions. He made it clear that there would be 'division' in natural families. (Cooper & Farrant, 1997:361,362)

Much attention is given to contemporary social problems in its worship and events. The Jesus Army campaigns against perceived social ills such as drugs, racism, homelessness and prostitution. It makes particular efforts to evangelise those in need, especially homeless young people, those involved in drug or alcohol

abuse, prisoners and ex-prisoners. The members believe that Jesus is establishing the ultimate Kingdom of God. They believe in the Holy Spirit and make a covenant bond with God. Members have strong brotherhood based on the covenant bond: they promise never to let one another down; to help one another through difficulties; to forgive and encourage one another; to fight together to save sinners with the gospel; to share in sufferings and disappointments. The Jesus Army claims that members care for one another, live simply and seek spiritual friendships. It values communal living. Members consider themselves as members of a big family.

Therefore, the Jesus Army can be categorised by the third theme of the typology provided by Wilson (see p.17, 18 in this thesis) in that it values communal living and believes that Jesus is establishing the ultimate Kingdom of God, and thus 'real salvation is attained by belonging to a sacred community, whose life-style and concerns are utterly divergent from those of worldly people' (Wilson, 1976: 63). In the typology provided by Wallis (see p.18-20 in this thesis) it can be categorised as a world-rejecting movement since it condemns social ills in urban society, values communal living, and believes that Jesus has established his rule against the prevailing social order and that Jesus is establishing the ultimate Kingdom of God.

I will now examine the history, teachings and practices of the FWBO in the similar way in which the Jesus Army was dealt with here.

4. History and characteristics of the FWBO

History[1]

Until the 1950s Buddhism in the UK was largely unknown to the general public. What Buddhism did exist was mainly Theravada Buddhism although the first groups of Mahayana Buddhism were also starting up. A school of Japanese Buddhism, 'Jodo Shin Shu (True Pure Land sect)' was established in the UK in 1952, and in the early 1960s, the largest Japanese New Religion, Soka Gakkai came to the UK. At the same time, Zen Buddhism became known and meditation became popular. Following the Zen boom of the late 1960s and 1970s, Tibetan Buddhism started to came to the UK in the 1980s (Wilson, 1990: Baumann, 1995a, 1995b). Buddhism immigrated to the UK from Asia and there are various schools which have their traditional origin in Asia; some are not necessarily rooted in the social experiences of migration and ethnic identity; others are substantial communities of immigrant Buddhists.

According to Cush (1996), Buddhism and the New Age movement were close in the loose ideas referred to in the 1960s and 1970s as the 'hippie counterculture' or 'alternative society', and in the 1980s those who had first met Buddhism in the hippie counterculture and alternative society had progressed into serious Buddhism. In the 1990s, Buddhism and the New Age movement seem to become close again through a renewed interest in the 'alternative' (ibid.). It is

[1] The main sources of literature for pursuing the FWBO are: the writings from the FWBO itself; Sangharakshita; Subhuti; Ratnaprabha; Bell (1991); Scott (1995; forthcoming); Batchelor (1995); Baumann (1991; 1995a; 1995b). The PhD thesis of Bell (1991) at the University of Durham entitled 'Buddhism in Britain: Development and Adaptation,' is an ethnography of the two Buddhist groups: the British Theravada Forest Sangha and the FWBO. This work focuses on the transmission of Buddhism under modern conditions into western culture, and is relevant to the social dimension of the FWBO. Ratnaprabha's (1987) 'A Re-Emergence of Buddhism: the case of the Friends of the western Buddhist Order' was of great value on the research of the FWBO, especially the information on evangelisation and conversion were particularly relevant.

during these three decades that the FWBO has established numerous centres in the UK and Europe.

The FWBO is regarded as part of the emergence of NRMs in the 1960s. It was founded in London in 1967 by Sangharakshita (Dennis Philip Edward Lingwood), an Englishman who lived in India for around twenty years where he learned and practised the traditions of Buddhism. Sangharakshita founded the FWBO against the background that there were few serious practitioners of Buddhism in the UK despite the fact that there was a great deal of scripture translations and scholarly works on Buddhism in the West. In 1968 Sangharakshita ordained twelve men and women into the Western Buddhist Order (henceforth the WBO).

Since its foundation, the FWBO has been introducing the teaching and practice of Buddhism, and is especially committed to adopting any ways of practising Buddhism which meet the needs of the Western people living in modern society. During the 1970s the FWBO grew in the UK, establishing various Buddhist centres, community houses and co-operatives. In 1973 Sangharakshita moved into a country house named 'Padmaloka' (realm of the Lotus) in Norfolk, which was his main base, where he wrote, taught and gave interviews for ten years. In 1980 Sangharakshita established the headquarters at Padmaloka, which was known as the Office of the WBO.

Since the opening of the large London Buddhist Centre in 1978, Sangharakshita visited there often, and from the late 1980s he was based increasingly in London. During this period, the FWBO expanded to the continent and to non-European countries, especially Western India where it had been closely associated with mass-conversion of the untouchables to Buddhism originally guided by Dr Ambedkar. In 1995 the Office of the WBO moved to Madhyamaloka in Birmingham from Padmaloka in Norfolk. There are about 70 urban Buddhist centres and 17 retreat centres around the world, of which 22 of the urban Buddhist centres and eight of the retreat centres are in the UK. The FWBO Buddhist

centres in England and Wales are usually registered as charities on the ground that they have religious objectives. Each local FWBO centre is an independent, autonomous body, responsible for running its own affairs and there is no legal incorporation as a whole. A council of between five and fifteen members is elected annually to run each centre. Each council is headed by a chairperson who is responsible for the centre. Consistency of practice and belief is achieved by the interchange of members and the fact that they all rely on the teachings of Sangharakshita.

Membership

There are three distinct levels of involvement in the FWBO. The first level is 'Friends'. The FWBO is not an organisation that one joins by paying a subscription. Anyone can go along to activities of the FWBO centres. Some people go to the FWBO centres and take meditation classes or courses but do not have any strong commitment to Buddhism or Sangharakshita. The FWBO calls these people 'Friends'. Being 'Friends' put people under no obligation whatsoever.

The second level of involvement is 'mitra'. 'Mitra' is a Sanskrit word for 'friend'. A mitra is someone who opts for a more intense involvement in the FWBO. Some mitras have asked for ordination, others may remain mitras. It is rare to become a mitra in less than two years from first contact with the FWBO. There are four main requirements for mitra applicants:(1) applicants decide that the FWBO is the group they are going to stay with of all the many Buddhist and other spiritual groups; (2) applicants are meditating regularly; (3) applicants really feel that an FWBO centre is their centre and do what they can to help it to support Order members in their work; (4) applicants are going to keep in contact with Order members.

The third level is Order members. These are members of the Western Buddhist Order (WBO), which is the main body of the FWBO. Order members are

responsible for directing the activities of the FWBO. Although Order members commit themselves fully to following the Buddhist Path to Enlightenment, they are neither monks nor nuns and do not live a monastic life-style. Some work full-time running the FWBO centres, working on publications of the FWBO, or in a retail gift business which raises money for the FWBO. Others work outside the FWBO. Some live in families bringing up children, others live alone or in single-sex community houses or shared homes. In order to become an Order member, ordination is required. Although ordination can be requested at any time, it usually takes several years to become ready for ordination. The request for ordination is considered by Sangharakshita or other senior Order members, taking into account the opinions of those Order members who know the person in question well. Sometimes more time in preparation for ordination is required.

The ordination is performed by a senior Order member known as a Preceptor, usually at a special ordination retreat. At the time of the ordination ceremony the person being ordained is given a new name, the meaning of which expresses the spiritual qualities of the ordained person in Sanskrit or Pali. Order members usually wear a garment called 'kesa' around the neck at the FWBO classes or events. The FWBO kesa is a strip of silk-like material embroidered with three flaming jewels symbolising the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Most Order members wear a white kesa, but those who are officially committed to celibacy wear a golden-yellow one.

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the ordination year by five-year interval, except for the category 1996-1998 which is a three-year interval. Figure 4.1 displays the cumulative number of the ordination. The FWBO itself claims that the core membership of the FWBO in the UK is around 2,000 (about four hundred Order members and over 1,500 mitras). Additionally there is an indeterminate

number of 'Friends', who have looser contact. Moreover, 20,000 people a year learn meditation at one of the FWBO centres or as an outreach activity in the UK[2].

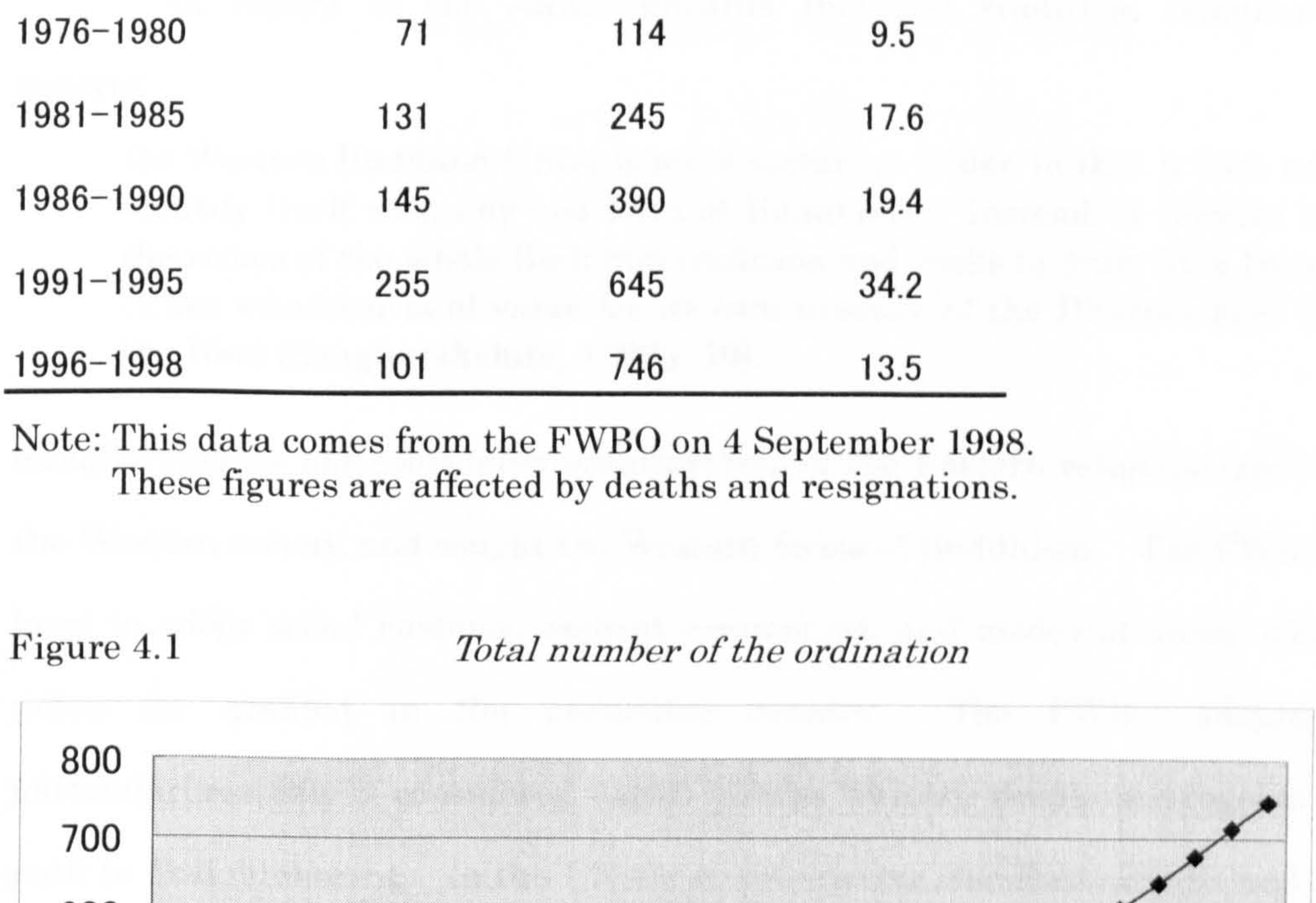
Table 4.1

Ordination year distribution

Year categories	No.	Cumulative No.	%
Before 1970	4	4	0.5
1971–1975	39	43	5.2
1976–1980	71	114	9.5
1981–1985	131	245	17.6
1986–1990	145	390	19.4
1991–1995	255	645	34.2
1996–1998	101	746	13.5

Note: This data comes from the FWBO on 4 September 1998.
These figures are affected by deaths and resignations.

Figure 4.1 *Total number of the ordination*



[2] FWBO Communications Office, Vishvapani's personal estimate.

The activities of the FWBO in London are concentrated in Bethnal Green. The London Buddhist Centre, the FWBO London Buddhist Arts Centre, and various Right Livelihood businesses are located there, and around 200 members live in this area.

Teachings and ethics

In regard to the stance towards Buddhist tradition, Sangharakshita asserts:

> the Western Buddhist Order is not a sectarian Order, in that it does not identify itself with any one form of Buddhism. Instead, it rejoices in the riches of the whole Buddhist tradition and seeks to draw from those riches whatever is of value for its own practice of the Dharma here in the West (Sangharakshita, 1992a: 19).

Sangharakshita has considered acculturation of the Eastern religious traditions in the Western society, and sought the Western forms of Buddhism. The FWBO is not keen to adopt social customs, ancient ceremonies, and modes of dress, which are taken for granted in the particular country. The FWBO adopts those particularities only if considered useful for the Western people to progress on the path to Enlightenment. In the UK there are various Buddhist schools and groups from various traditions and various countries such as Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, China, Japan, and Tibet. Sangharakshita, however, considers their ways to introduce Buddhism to the West were largely not suited to the Western people living in modern society:

> The FWBO derives the inspiration and guidance of the Theravada, Pure Land Buddhism, Zen and Tibetan Buddhism not so much from these schools in the form in which they survive in the East, and have been introduced in the West, as from a selection of the scriptures on which, in principle, they respectively are based (Sangharakshita, 1996a: 23).

Ninian, a 28-year- old student, illustrates this: 'even Westerners in the modern culture can practise Buddhism at the FWBO' (F3). He came to know about the

FWBO through a leaflet on meditation in a local library and has been practising meditation at a Buddhist centre of the FWBO for three months. Before that, he had visited the Heruka Centre[3]. He found it good for relaxation and helpful for stress, but he thinks that 'Heruka Centre is more religious than the FWBO and that they gave up the western world' (F3). Ninian says, 'Living in London, the way of Heruka Centre is very difficult. The FWBO suits people living in London. It is a good idea' (F3).

The FWBO considers itself as 'a fully traditional Buddhist school' from the point of view that 'the essence of Buddhism is universal and unchanging, and it is that essence that we are trying to communicate' (Vessantara 'The FWBO: An Introduction', 1996: 9). The FWBO favours a non-sectarian and integrative Buddhism. Baumann (1995b: 11) remarks, 'The Buddha always encouraged people to rely on their own experience. Sangharakshita's interpretation of Buddhism purposefully departed from existing Buddhist traditions in Asia.' The FWBO is not devoted to just one Buddhist tradition such as Theravada or Tibetan Buddhism, either historically or contemporarily. The members of the FWBO study and practise whatever they find conducive to the spiritual developments of the individual, regardless of which Buddhist tradition it comes from. Sangharakshita states:

> In the WBO and FWBO commitment, in the sense of Going for Refuge, is primary, and life-style, in the sense of living more as a monk or nun or more as a layman or laywoman, is secondary. This does not mean that life-style is unimportant but only that it is less important than commitment or Going for Refuge, the latter being the central or

[3] Heruka Centre is located at Golders Green, north London. (A residential Centre and community of the New Kadampa Tradition). The New Kadampa Tradition (NKT) is a Mahayana Buddhist tradition founded by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, a Tibetan Buddhist Master resident in the UK since 1977. The term 'Kadampa' means 'those who put all of the Buddha's instructions into practice.' The purpose of the NKT is to preserve and to promote the essence of the Buddha's teachings in a form that is suited to the western mind and way of life. There are over 80 centres in the UK and Ireland and over 30 centres in Spain, Germany, Switzerland, France, Finland, Holland, Canada, the USA, Mexico and Brazil (Buddhist Society Publications 1994 London, *Buddhist Directory*: pp. 92, 93).

definitive act of the Buddhist life and as such the fundamental basis of unity and union among Buddhists (Sangharakshita, 1992a: 19).

Let us now look at its teachings and ethics more closely.

Going for refuge

In both the Theravada and Mahayana tradition 'Going for Refuge' is the most repeated and central expression of belief. Sangharakshita (1992a: 17) considers a Buddhist to be 'someone who goes for Refuge to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, and who, as an expression and as reinforcement of that Going for Refuge, seeks to observe the ethical precepts of Buddhism.' Sangharakshita explains the threefold Going for Refuge:

> Going for Refuge to the Buddha means accepting the Buddha, and no other, as one's ultimate spiritual guide and exemplar. Going for Refuge to the Dharma means doing one's utmost to understand, practice, and realize the fundamental import of the Buddha's teaching. Going for Refuge to the Sangha means looking for inspiration and guidance to those followers of the Buddha, both past and present, who are spiritually more advanced than oneself (1992a: 17).

Traditionally both in Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism it is very important to go for refuge to the Three Jewels, or to respect the Three Jewels: the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Going for refuge is a personal commitment to the realisation of Enlightenment (Buddha) by following the path (Dharma) in fellowship with and with guidance from others (Sangha). In the FWBO, they recite the following words:

> Going For Refuge
> This very day I go for my refuge to the powerful protectors, whose purpose is to guard the universe; the mighty conquerors who overcome suffering everywhere.
> Wholeheartedly also I take my refuge in the Dharma they have ascertained, which is the abode of security against the rounds of rebirth.
> Likewise in the host of Bodhisattvas I take my refuge (The FWBO Puja book, A Book of Buddhist Devotional Texts, 1990: 16).

After the formula, they recite the threefold Going for Refuge in Pali. All this conforms to traditional Buddhist practice. Starting to respect the Three Jewels is

the turning point which denotes conversion into a Buddhist life. It is claimed that it is not possible to be born a Buddhist, 'since one has to be sufficiently mature to appreciate the significance of the Three Jewels' (Ratnaprabha, 1987: 60).

We shall now turn to the ethical precepts which Buddhist are also required to observe as 'an expression and reinforcement of the threefold Going for Refuge' (Sangharakshita, 1992a: 17).

Precepts

According to Sangharakshita, the total spiritual community is made up of individuals following a wide range of life-styles and at all levels of the path, and they can only experience their ethical unity in those precepts that describe a pattern of ethical behaviour applying to them all (Subhuti[4], 1994: 137). Sangharakshita argues:

> Some of the precepts observed only by the monks are of no real ethical significance, being in some cases concerned with matters of a quite trivial nature and demonstrably the product of social conditions prevailing at the time of the Buddha or shortly after (1985: 42).

Basically the FWBO follows the standard five precepts, i.e. abstaining from taking life, abstaining from taking the not-given, abstaining from sexual misconduct, abstaining from false speech, and abstaining from taking intoxicants. These five precepts are chanted regularly in Pali during 'puja'. Mitras are expected to follow the standard five precepts. Sangharakshita, however, believes that 'five precepts' is not sufficiently comprehensive (Subhuti, 1994: 139). He considers the traditional 'ten precepts' is a fundamental code of ethical conduct applying to all kinds of people.

In founding the WBO, Sangharakshita gave all his disciples the same set of ten precepts to observe (Subhuti, 1994: 130). Traditionally, the negative formulation of

[4] Subhuti (Alex Kennedy) was born in England in 1947, joined the WBO in 1973. He served Sangharakshita as his personal secretary for eight years. He has written many books about the FWBO and he developed and directed the training process for men preparing for ordination into the WBO. He leads retreats and courses as one of Sangharakshita's leading disciples.

the ten precepts has been recited, but Sangharakshita considers it necessary to bring out the positive aspirations as well. He has therefore composed lines expressive of the positive aspect of each precept:

- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from killing living being.
  With deeds of loving-kindness, I purify my body.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from taking the not-given.
  With open-handed generosity, I purify my body.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from sexual misconduct.
  With stillness, simplicity, and contentment, I purify my body.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from false speech.
  With truthful communication, I purify my speech.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from harsh speech.
  With words kindly and gracious, I purify my speech.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from frivolous speech.
  With utterance helpful and harmonious, I purify my speech.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from slanderous speech.
  (The positive counterpart of this precept is included in the previous stanza.)
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from covetousness.
  Abandoning covetousness for tranquillity, I purify my mind.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from hatred.
  Changing hatred into compassion, I purify my mind.
- I undertake the training principle of abstaining from false views.
  Transforming ignorance into wisdom, I purify my mind.

The ten precepts are taken at ordination, and the members recite the negative formulation of the ten precepts in Pali and then the positive verses in English in their daily practices.

Gender, marriage and celibacy

Sangharakshita (1992a: 19) believes women to have the same spiritual potential as men: 'the Western Buddhist Order is an Order of both men and women, who are admitted on equal terms. Men and women receive the same ordination, engage in the same spiritual practices, and undertake the same organizational responsibilities.' On the other hand, men and women practise separately many of the activities within the FWBO, because Sangharakshita considers that single-sex

communities and practises are the most effective and supportive for spiritual practice (cf., Sangharakshita, 1996c: 54).

Until the early seventies, activities in the FWBO were mixed. The first experiments with separation of men and women involved a series of retreats and they found the separation worked well, reducing the psychological dependence and conflict. Nowadays there are single-sex retreat centres such as Padmaloka' (Realm of the Lotus) Buddhist retreat centre for men in Norfolk and 'Taraloka' (Realm of compassion) Buddhist retreat centre for women on the Wales and Shropshire border. Single-sex retreats are one expression of a whole range of single-sex activities within the FWBO; a range which includes study groups, community houses, and Right Livelihood businesses. Moreover, there is a biannual magazine for women called 'Lotus Realm: A New Voice for Buddhist Women'.

> Sangharakshita explains that single-sex activities give men and women an opportunity to transcend sexual polarity and experience themselves as truly human. He concludes with the words 'For those who wish to develop as individuals, and to progress on the path to Enlightenment, meditation and all kinds of single-sex situations are, in the absence of transcendental insight, absolutely indispensable' (Golden Drum No. 19, January 1991: 10).

Subhuti (1994: 170) says 'Women in the FWBO have developed, on their own initiative, a full range of facilities that provide for their spiritual needs, and the movement now enjoys two well-developed 'wings': a men's and a women's.'

Although the FWBO is not opposed to getting married and having children, it encourages celibacy.

> Sangharakshita's ideas on the spiritual benefits of single-sex situations do not imply that those in more conventional marriages cannot develop as individuals. However they will probably have difficulties to work with which others do not have. Their relationships with their spouses will often involve projection and dependency of which they may not be fully aware. One partner may wish to commit themselves to the Buddhist path while the other does not – or does not want to do so as deeply – and this may well lead to tensions and conflict. Finally, children may be involved, adding further complications of attachment, and more restrictions on time and energy available for spiritual practice and for spiritual friendship. Once more it must be stressed that Sangharakshita does consider that those with families can go for Refuge

> – but they will have difficulties that their brothers and sisters who are not parents will not have (Subhuti, 1994: 174, 175).

'Sangharakshita considers that having children is a kind of vocation and that only those who really feel that calling should do so' (Subhuti, 1994: 175).

Practices and activities

There are various practices and activities within the FWBO. Ellen, a 41-year-old Order member, states, 'it is not good to learn the Dharma at a class if you are not practising it yourself' (F24). Ellen, who values and practises it daily, notices the importance of balance between practice and learning. We looked at teachings and ethics, and then we shall now look at practices and activities which are based on the teachings and ethics.

Meditation, ritual, retreat and festivals

Anyone who attends meditation classes at FWBO centres encounters the 'Mindfulness of Breathing' and the 'Metta Bhavana (Pali: development or cultivation of loving-kindness)'. These are the two practices the FWBO teaches to all newcomers. In the 'Mindfulness of Breathing' they use the ordinary process of breathing as a focus for a steadily deepening level of concentration and psychic integration. According to the FWBO, it has the advantage of affording immediate results, even after twenty minutes people will inevitably feel calmer, more concentrated, and more awake (Ngabodhi (ed.) 1992: 5).

In contrast, the Metta Bhavana is not so straightforward. According to the FWBO, it is an exercise in which they try to transform their emotional state – not just their present mood and not just for a few minutes or hours, but at a very deep level and for a long time. Through it they believe that they can overcome negative feelings such as fear and dislike, and replace them with confidence, kindness, and an out-going approach to life. During the Metta Bhavana practice, they try to encourage and strengthen feelings of universal loving-kindness. According to the

FWBO, the real point of the exercise is to make a definite, if gradual, impact on one's basic emotional nature. For this reason, immediate results one achieves are less important or relevant than those are in the case of the Mindfulness of Breathing.

The practice is divided into five stages, to each of which they devote between five and ten minutes. During the first four stages, they call to mind themselves, a friend, a 'neutral' person, and an 'enemy' successively. At each stage they try to contact and strengthen a feeling of intense but objective friendliness for the person in mind, a feeling that is not dependent on subjective and passing reactions. In the fifth stage they direct that feeling towards all four people simultaneously, without preference or prejudice, before encouraging it to expand and extend outwards towards all beings.

> Enlightenment is traditionally portrayed as consisting of the perfect unfoldment of wisdom and compassion. If wisdom is something that can and must be developed as we progress from the unenlightened to the Enlightened state, then surely it must also be possible, and necessary, to develop the emotions too. This is why Buddhism, despite its early reputation in the West for cool rationalism, involves so much devotional practice, why it places such a high value on friendship, and why it has such a rich mythic dimension (Nagabodhi (ed.), 1992 : 6).

Meditation is usually preceded by a liturgical and devotional ritual, called 'puja'; the exceptions are generally beginners' classes, retreats and morning meditation. Puja usually takes pace in a large room at a FWBO centre, containing a Buddha image, flowers, flickering candles, and fragrant incense. During Puja, members recite and chant 'Going for Refuge'and 'Five Precepts':

> Through our regular and sincere practice of Puja, in company with our fellow aspirants, we can refine our emotional positivity to such a pitch that we begin to break through our habitual self-centredness and isolation, and feel an empathy with all life ('The FWBO Puja Book: A Book of Buddhist Devotional Texts', 1990: 8, 9).

Its purpose is to bring about a feeling of compassion which leads members to follow the path to Enlightenment.

A retreat is a period spent in quiet rural area devoted to meditation, 'Puja' and study. According to the explanation of the FWBO, a retreat 'gives us time and

a tranquil environment . . . It is a chance to shake off the dust of the city and of our old self. In a safe environment, we can discover and explore richer ways of living our lives' (Vessantara, 1996: 18, 19). There are various different kinds of FWBO retreat. Some are specifically for beginners, others are just for mitras or Order members, others are for gay people, and others concentrate on study.

The FWBO has various festivals, some of which are celebrated at in FWBO centres separately and others are held at a single venue. Here is a list of the main festivals of the FWBO:

- 15 February. Parinirvana Day: The commemoration of the Buddha's death. Also on this day they remember friends and relatives who died during the past twelve months.
- 6 April. FWBO Day: The anniversary of the founding of the FWBO.
- 7 April. WBO Day: The anniversary of the founding of the WBO.
- 8 April. The Buddha's Birthday: Marking the Buddha's birth at Kapilavastu in Nepal.
- April/May. Buddha Day: The celebration of the Buddha's attainment of Enlightenment.
- June/July. Dharma Day: The Buddha first communicated his discovery of the path to Enlightenment in the Deer Park at Saranath.
- August. Padmasambhava Day: Padmasambhava was the Indian teacher who was instrumental in establishing Buddhism in Tibet. He is the central figure of the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism to which most of Sangharakshita's Tibetan teachers belonged.
- October/November. Sangha Day: They celebrate that they are not alone, totally reliant on their own resources for their development.

Some of the above festivals are celebrated on the days based on the lunar calendar.

Evangelisation

It is not accurate to describe the FWBO as fiercely evangelical. There is no house to house campaigning or distribution of literature in the street. The FWBO does the propagation of Buddhism by means of the introductory meditation and Buddhist teaching classes open to the public and other activities for more experienced practitioners. The classes give a basic grounding in the principles and

practices of Buddhism. Weekend retreats in the quiet country provide conditions for meditation and reflection. People can try some aspects of Buddhism through those activities. Indeed, meditation courses seem to be a typical way in which people encounter the FWBO. We shall look at members' encounters with the FWBO in chapter five.

Philip, a 42-year-old Order member, has never evangelised anyone. He says, 'I don't think evangelisation is generally the FWBO's way at all' (F23). He thinks that the FWBO goes 'a bit too far the other way'. Indeed, people usually get involved in the FWBO through going to FWBO centres by themselves, and the attitudes of members at FWBO centres are not evangelistic. Philip says:

> If people come to a Buddhist centre it is quite a gradual process for them to get involved. It usually takes a few years before they would ask to be a mitra, for example. I think it does take some time to understand what Buddhism is about. It is something that people have to decide to want to do for themselves. I think Buddhism is about you as an individual taking responsibility for your own life. You can't change somebody else; you have to change yourself. So the individuals who get involved have to decide for themselves that they want to get involved and that they want to take responsibility for their lives (F23).

Ellen, a 41-year-old Order member, says, 'The way I would approach teaching the Dharma is to tell people, especially new people at the centre, what is here and how Buddhism works for me. So that they know there is an option that they can take if they want it' (F24). According to the FWBO itself:

> Naturally, Buddhists would say that one can become a happier and better person if one decides to follow the Buddhist path, but Buddhism offers itself as an opportunity: its methods and teachings are available to all those who want to make use of them. People are welcome to take as little or as much of Buddhism as they feel ready for (Vessantara 'The FWBO: An Introduction', 1996: 7).

Ellen puts emphasis on a personal choice:

> I think you should give people a free choice really, if they wish to take it. There is a precept to teach not to harm other living beings, and part of that would be not to do anything to them that they wouldn't want you to do to them. So, to do anything against somebody else's wishes would be breaking that precept. I don't agree with forcing things on people. I have been approached myself by all sorts of religious groups, who tell you that you are damned if you don't follow their belief. That is an

> awful thing to say to somebody; it is putting a lot of force and a lot of pressure on people (F24).

On the other hand, Ellen thinks that she needs to be more confident and to speak about the Dharma to people who are not Buddhists. She says:

> I think we shouldn't be too shy to talk about it. I think sometimes, because of our fear of being too evangelical, we shy back from even talking about it. We should just be happy to talk about Buddhism and to tell people what is on offer, and not feel that we are going to be pressurising people (F24).

Ellen sent a book about meditation to her sister who has been suffering recently. Actually the sister has used it and found it helpful, but Ellen does not think that her sister will attend a class at a FWBO Buddhist centre (F24).

In contrast, Philip thinks practically:

> The problem is that we are already quite busy. I don't think at the moment we have enough Order members to have many more Buddhist centres opening or have many more people coming along. At the moment the main focus of the movement is ordination in a sense (F23).

According to an Order member, 'Buddhism is said to be a missionary religion not because Buddhists seek to control large numbers of people, but because Buddhist teachings have always emphasised concern for the welfare of others (Ratnaprabha, 1987: 64).' Members are, however, not necessarily expected to make any deliberate attempt to interest others in the FWBO or in Buddhism in general. As Ratnaprabha (1987: 65) points out, their life-style, attitudes, personality, and knowledge, which reflect their commitment to the FWBO, can influence people they meet in daily life, whether or not there is a conscious attempt to do so. John, a 45-year-old mitra, is a good example. He says:

> I am interested in living the Dharma as much as I can myself, thereby hopefully becoming an attractive person. I believe the Dharma is an attractive, beautiful thing. So when that is embodied in a person, I believe that person becomes, to some degree, beautiful and attractive. So I would hope that if I were going to convert somebody, it is purely by the sort of person I am, not by my words or persuasion (F21).

John adds, 'I don't like the idea of evangelisation' (F21). He thinks that Buddhism can only work by each individual accepting it themselves. He says, 'I am quite

happy to talk to anybody about Buddhism if they wish me to, but I am not interested in trying to convert anybody. I really don't think it is of any use' (F21). Since one has to be sufficiently mature to appreciate the significance of the Three Jewels to become a Buddhist, parents in the FWBO are advised not to make any attempt to persuade their children to become Buddhists. Nevertheless, quite a number of Order members have parents or grown-up offspring also involved in the FWBO (Ratnaprabha, 1987: 60).

Globally, there are about seventy Buddhist centres, 17 retreat centres and 38 meeting groups in over twenty countries including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Holland, India, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, and the USA. The FWBO has developed relationships with other Buddhist groups. They joined the European Buddhist Union in 1980. The FWBO is also involved with the International Network of Engaged Buddhist (INEB) which are trying to find ways of applying Buddhism to the obtaining social and political conditions ('Golden Drum' No.30, 1993: 25). Moreover, the FWBO was involved in setting up the Network of Buddhist Organisations (UK) in 1994. Sangharakshita explains the policy towards others:

> As you know, in the Order we practice – and teach – the metta-bhavana or 'development of loving-kindness' meditation, in which feelings of ardent goodwill are successively directed to oneself, a friend, a neutral person, an enemy, and, eventually, to all living beings. But this does not mean that metta is something one experiences only when seated on the meditation cushion. Far from it. Metta or loving-kindness is an emotion which ideally the Buddhist should feel at all times (at least when awake), in all places, and with regard to every person – and every animal – with whom he (or she) comes in contact, irrespective of that person's nationality, race, religion, age, social position, or sexual orientation. Extending the hand of spiritual fellowship to other Buddhists thus does not exclude the possibility of friendship with those who are not Buddhists. In principle we extend the hand of friendship to all (Sangharakshita, 1996a: 39, 40).

Order members and the FWBO centres frequently receive requests from organisations outside the movement to provide speakers or activity leaders. Order members give talks at meetings of the followers of other religions, in schools and

colleges, and adult education institutes in response to requests. 'Other Buddhist groups are very curious to see how western Buddhism is developing, and Order members have very friendly communication nowadays with most such groups. These contacts are individual . . .' (Ratnaprabha, 1987: 65). Sangharakshita puts emphasis on the importance of personal contact:

> Those of us who have the responsibility of liaising with 'other' Buddhist groups therefore do our best to relate to them in our capacity as individuals, not just as faceless 'representatives' of the FWBO. It is as individuals – individuals who have gone for Refuge to the Three Jewels – that we extend to them the hand of spiritual fellowship, in this way seeking to place the relationship between the Order and their organization on the basis of friendship between some at least of our respective members. Only on such a basis, I believe, is genuine co-operation between different parts of the Buddhist world really possible (1996a: 38).

Other activities: alternative treatments, arts and businesses

According to the FWBO, although meditation is the direct way of working on the mind, Buddhism aims to develop the whole person and people can positively affect the mind by working with their body: 'Buddhists regard their bodies as the physical vehicles in which they will gain Enlightenment, and thus follow a middle way, neither ill-treating nor glorifying them' (Vessantara, 1996: 18). Bodywise Natural Health Centre, which was established in 1986 in the East End of London, provides various alternative treatments and health care. There are over thirty practitioners offering different therapies such as yoga, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture, Alexander Technique, aromatherapy, homeopathy, hypnotherapy, and reiki. The FWBO does not entirely reject Western medicine. Those are additional treatments and the FWBO takes what it regards as useful from many cultures. In this sense, members of the FWBO are pragmatic[5].

[5] [View of the FWBO, Vishvapani] Bodywise was started by a group of individuals from the FWBO who were practitioners of alternative therapies. It seems wrong to view it as an

The FWBO is open to draw on Western art and literature. Sangharakshita and members of the FWBO have developed a consistent critique of Western art, and they believe some of the Western artists, poets, and writers have had intuitions of the higher states to which Buddhist practice leads. The London Buddhist Arts Centre provides a forum in which to develop an understanding of the place of the arts in Buddhist life, as well as to encourage the practice of the arts in a Buddhist context. They offer workshops, seminars, lectures, performances, exhibitions, recitals of music and poetry. The FWBO feels confident that 'our exploration of the arts will enrich our Buddhist practice, and that our contact with Buddhism will give us an even more profound understanding of the potential – and limitations – of Western culture' (Vessantara, 1996 :24).

The FWBO businesses arose because Sangharakshita noticed that 'Some of the people who were living together in FWBO residential spiritual communities, but who had outside jobs, started to feel that they wanted to work together' (Sangharakshita, 1992a: 13). The FWBO businesses are called 'Right Livelihood businesses' which broadly speaking means they are ethical and members who work for the businesses regards it as the practice of ethical work. The businesses are located in various places in the UK and abroad. The FWBO has developed businesses and run wholefoods shops, vegetarian restaurants, a gift wholesale business, and publication. Sangharakshita explains:

> They [Right Livelihood businesses] provided those working in them with material support, they enabled Buddhists to work with one another, they conducted themselves in accordance with Buddhist ethical principles, and they gave financial support to Buddhist activities (1992a: 14).

The biggest FWBO businesses is Windhorse Trading which employs about 200 men and women, around half of them at the head office and warehouse in

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expression of values or beliefs of the FWBO, which has no collective approach to medicine etc. Many practitioners at the Bodywise Natural Health Centre are not Buddhists.

Cambridge, and the rest in 17 'Evolution' stores around the UK cities such as London, Birmingham, and Manchester.

The employees, all of whom are involved in the FWBO, are divided into teams. Each team begins the day with Buddhist ritual and chanting.

> Everyone receive the same basic income with extra money given where needed . . . We are able to combine hierarchy and communalism in a uniquely Buddhist way. Decisions about how we live and work are made by consensus (not by democratic votes) . . . the system works on the basis of personal relationships rather than a power structure (Dharma Life No.6 Winter 1997: 26, 27).

All these businesses have four aims: (1) to provide a work situation which helps people to develop as individuals; (2) to offer something useful to society; (3) to provide a reasonable level of support for their workers; (4) to make a profit to donate to a worthwhile cause (Vessantara, 1996: 26-28).

In 1996 the sales of Windhorse Trading were £7.5 million on which it made profits of £1.25 million. £520,000 of the profits were given to Buddhist centres and charities around the world, and the balance of the profit was reinvested in the business.

Authority

Weber's sociological concept of charismatic authority has been described in chapter three (see p.75, 76). As we saw, charisma denotes a quality not of the individual, but of a relationship between followers and the man in whom they believe. The term 'guru' is often used in relation to the charismatic authority of the founders of NRMs which have an eastern origin (e.g. Puttick, 1994). A guru is believed by his or her disciples to be the spiritual teacher, supreme master or the embodiment of Buddhahood. Although some of the members of the FWBO regard Sangharakshita as such a guru, Sangharakshita himself seems to have been careful of charismatic authority and reluctant to claim the status of a guru. Let us look at the life of Sangharakshita.

Sangharakshita was born as Dennis Philip Edward Lingwood in South London to a working class family in 1925. A sickly child, Sangharakshita received little schooling and was for the most part self-taught. In 1942 he read Buddhist texts and realised that he was inclined to think in a Buddhist way. He became a member of the London Buddhist Society, and took the three refuges and five precepts from a Burmese monk.

Sangharakshita was conscripted into the British army in 1943 and the following year he was sent to India. After the Second World War, he remained in India. In 1949 he was ordained as a novice of Theravada Buddhism by a Burmese monk and given the name Sangharakshita: 'protected by the spiritual community'. Later he practised Tibetan Buddhism as well. During the two decades living in Asia, Sangharakshita gained a fundamental understanding of various Buddhist schools and traditions and he studied, taught and wrote about Buddhism. After mass-conversion guided by Dr Ambedkar of 380,000 untouchables to Buddhism and his death in 1956, Sangharakshita supported Dr Ambedkar's work by lecturing amongst the untouchables.

Sangharakshita returned to England in August 1964 at the invitation of the English Sangha Trust and stayed in the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara. It is said that he realised that there was a need for Buddhism in England and at the same time observed the constraints of formality that the various schools or traditions could impose. He settled in England and founded his own organisation, the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order in 1967. Sangharakshita taught all the classes, gave all the lectures, and led every course and retreat. He has published over forty books.

Although the image of Buddha and his spiritual experience serve as the most important authority, the members of the FWBO look to Sangharakshita as a spiritual teacher in the context in which they are trying to gain Enlightenment.

Kathy, a 29-year-old mitra, for example, says:

> Sangharakshita is a great inspiration when I think of his life and what he has done. He made very courageous steps in his life: he gave up everything and became a monk. He is a great scholar with great knowledge and experience. He has made Buddhism available to me through his teaching and his interpretation of the teachings. He has made it much more accessible to me (F7).

She chants in front of a photo of Sangharakshita. Glen, a 28-year-old mitra, also respects Sangharakshita in terms of what he has done:

> He has really given his life to set up a movement and he has an extraordinary knowledge of Buddhism. I am really grateful for that because for me and for my teacher and all those who have come into contact with him, he has put the whole Buddhist world, I think, in quite a good perspective. It is not the only perspective, but he has given us a way into the Buddha's teaching (F15).

Glen, on the other hand, says 'I don't think about him that much, I just have moments where I feel very grateful. He doesn't have much significance personally, more indirectly' (F15). This may be because he has never met Sangharakshita personally.

Rachel, a 43-year-old Order member, does not have such a direct relationship with Sangharakshita as do some older Order members in that Sangharakshita did not ordain her. Although he is not her preceptor, Rachel considers him as her teacher:

> Sangharakshita is the person who translated Buddhism and made it accessible to me. I have a shrine and it varies, I change it quite regularly. Most of the time I have a picture of Sangharakshita and all his teachers on my shrine. I don't tend to just have a picture of him. I like the sense of the lineage. Quite often I meditate here at the centre in the morning and there is no picture of him. I don't feel it to be an essential part of my shrine. In my mind and heart I hold him as my teacher (F8).

Terry, a 44-year-old mitra working for one of the Right Livelihood businesses, chants a mantra for Sangharakshita with his colleagues at the end of every morning meeting.

> We all chant a long life mantra dedicated to him. There is the going for refuge and prostration practice in which he is on the refuge tree, and that involves prostration and chanting of verses. I think more generally, I largely see him as a very positive role model, a prime

example of how to lead a spiritual life. He is also probably the most spiritually advanced person in my orbit, so I do respond to him as a teacher and someone who has much greater insight into Buddhism and reality than I do. I look to him as a teacher and respond to his interpretation of Buddhism (F14).

Regarding authority within the FWBO, Sangharakshita acknowledges the importance of the 'vertical relationships'. By this he means 'the relationship between someone more experienced on the path and someone less experienced' ('Dharma Life' No.4, spring 1997: 18). In Sangharakshita's lecture, 'Is a guru necessary?' he stresses that 'human evolution is extremely difficult without contact with someone more evolved than oneself – for most people, he says, there is no other way' (Subhuti, 1994: 153). At the same time, Sangharakshita asserts that such a relationship should be based on 'kalyana mitrata' (spiritual friendship in Sanskrit), which means that a person more experienced on the path than oneself gives instruction and guidance based on mutual goodwill and sympathy. Subhuti, a senior Order members, writes:

> Sangharakshita has been my friend and guide for 26 years . . . Through my contact with him I have gained the confidence to dedicate myself ever more fully to the Buddhist life. Seeing the depth and intensity of his immersion in Buddhist ideals has given me the courage to plunge in more deeply myself. In knowing him I have experienced a level of spiritual understanding beyond my own, by which I have tried to haul myself up beyond myself. He has been a constant example to me of intelligence, sensitivity, kindness, uncompromising commitment to the Three Jewels, wit, practicality, care, skilful action – and friendship. Sometimes his superior qualities have seemed to me almost oppressive, but he himself has never been anything but a friend, even a spiritual friend, a true *kalyana mitra* ('Dharma Life' No. 4, spring 1997: 19).

Sangharakshita is over seventy years old now. He is concerned about the transfer of responsibility for the FWBO to some of his disciples. The FWBO has been preparing for the situation after Sangharakshita's death for some time. Since 1985, three male and two female Order members called Public Preceptors have been ordaining people into the WBO[6]. In 1993 Sangharakshita asked the five Public

[6] Before then, Sangharakshita himself performed all the ordination ceremonies.

Preceptors, together with eight other senior Order members to form the Preceptors' College Council. More Public Preceptors have recently been appointed; there are now five male and four female Order members. The Preceptors' College, whose building is located in Birmingham, has taken on responsibility for ordination into the WBO and providing spiritual leadership for the FWBO. Subhuti is a central senior member of the Council. He says, 'No doubt there will be a difference when Sangharakshita is no longer with us, but I think we are ready to take full responsibility whenever that happens. We have all worked closely with Sangharakshita and many of us know his teaching and his way of looking at things very deeply indeed' ('Dharma Life' No. 5, summer 1997: 61). Sangharakshita has nearly completed the process of hand over responsibility to others. He announced in August 1999 that he would step down as head of the WBO and appoint his successor a year later, on his 76th birthday in August 2000. This process has given legitimacy to the members of the Preceptors' College and the direction to the FWBO.

Residential community

Each centre forms a *sangha*: a spiritual community of practising Buddhists who participate together in studying Buddhism, meditation and devotional practices as well as developing friendships with one another. Sangharakshita explains:

> Certainly each individual must develop for him-or herself, by his or her own efforts, but we will develop more easily and more enjoyably if we do so in spiritual fellowship with others. We could even say that spiritual fellowship is necessary to individual development. In the spiritual community all help each, and each helps all (1990a: 81).

The FWBO states Sangharakshita's terminology 'the individual' must not be interpreted in terms of modern individualism (Subhuti, 1994: 119-121). Sangharakshita distinguishes the *individual* from the *individualist*:

> An individual is someone who has developed a higher level what we call 'reflexive consciousness'. The individualist still 'shares' the consciousness of the group . . . and therefore asserts his or her own interests at the expense of others in the groups. The *individual* is therefore alienated from the group in what we may call a vertical

> direction, while the *individualist* is alienated from the group horizontally. The individualist is a sort of broken-off fragment of the group, reacting, even rebelling, against the group . . . The individual, on the other hand, has passed, or begun to pass, beyond the group, beyond group consciousness; he is no longer limited by group consciousness (1990a, 40, 41).

Thus, the FWBO focuses on both individual development and spiritual fellowship.

Although the members are not restricted to one particular life-style, since they think 'any ethically positive lifestyle is potentially compatible with genuine commitment' (Ratnaprabha, 1987: 61), many of the members live in residential communities. Sangharakshita notes:

> When the FWBO had held a few retreats, some of the people who had taken part in them regularly started to feel that they wanted to prolong the experience, at least to an extent. Even if they were not in a position to move to the countryside, or give up their jobs (though some did give them up), they wanted to live with other Buddhists and have more time for thinking about the Dharma and, of course, more time for practising it (Sangharakshita, 1992a: 12).

In this way, their residential community came into existence. Sangharakshita explains the advantage of living in a community house:

> You can enjoy the regular companionship of other spiritually committed people. You are free to relate at the deepest level of your being, which is very stimulating and inspiring – and also challenging and demanding. You can live economically, since community members can pool resources and buy food in bulk, share the use of things like refrigerators, cars, and washing machines, and also share household chores and child care, if there are children in the community [house]. And spiritual [residential] communities also function as a kind of informal Buddhist centre: members can give friends and visitors a glimpse of a new way of life (1996c: 54).

There are community houses around most FWBO centres: 62 Men's community houses and 26 Women's community houses. The size of community houses ranges from three to about two dozen people. Some comprise a few friends sharing a house or a flat, while others are more intensive situations with a regular programme of meditation, study, ritual and community meetings. Although their living arrangements are also varied, they all take advantage of living together with congenial members who are trying to transform themselves through Buddhism.

The communal living offers a supportive environment for spiritual practice, and the chance to deepen friendships. Most community houses are single-sex, where members practise together. Sangharakshita declares:

> We change Western society, thereby integrating Buddhism into that society, by creating Western Buddhist institutions, in this case the institution of the residential spiritual community, which to some extent replaces the institution of the nuclear family (1992a: 13).

According to the FWBO, even for members who have committed themselves to the FWBO for a long time, it would be hard to keep self-motivated to practice, if they should practise on their own. The benefits of communal living are a supportive environment for spiritual practice and the opportunity to deepen friendships with others who share their interests. It seems primarily important for members who are asking for ordination to learn and practise Buddhism through observing the lives of more advanced members on the Buddhist path. Because of such a full supportive environment, joining a community house can be a decisive action. For those who are considering joining a community house, most of the community houses allow short stays to gain an experience the communal living.

Discussion

The FWBO is regarded as an NRM that emerged in the 1960s, and is sociologically classed as such because of the historical background. The FWBO is not keen to adopt social customs, ancient ceremonies, and modes of dress, which are taken for granted in the particular country. However, the FWBO claims that it values the universal essence of Buddhism, and it considers itself as a traditional Buddhist school in that sense.

Sangharakshita has warned against mixing Buddhism with other religions and there has been a degree of antipathy towards Christianity in the FWBO (e.g. Sangharakshita 'Buddhism and blasphemy', 1977, 1989; Subhuti, 1988; Dharma Life' No. 5, 1997). Peggy Morgan notes:

Many of the members of WBO and FWBO are reacting against Christianity in their home backgrounds and schooling. The problems referred to earlier were specified as the Christian teaching about sin and guilt, especially in respect of sexual morality. Ven. Sangharakshita also mentioned the intolerance and persecution in Christian history, although again some members distinguish between the figure of Jesus and the intolerance of the church. The point about sin and guilt needs to be seen in relation to the general differences between the Buddhist and Christian analysis of the human predicament referred to earlier and the way in which the Buddhist analysis sees its roots in ignorance and the Christian in original sin (1988: 12)[7].

In contrast, Cush (1996) refers to the views of the FWBO on the New Age:

> there have been changes in attitude to the New Age over the last two decades . . . In the early days FWBO was closely associated with the New Age movement. In the late 1970s until 1981, they had a stall at the 'Festival of Body Mind and Spirit'. In the 1980s, FWBO distinguishes itself from such events, feeling that 'Dharma is devalued by being sold in the spiritual supermarket' (1996: 203, 204).

In the 1990s, with a confidence in the strength of its tradition, the FWBO moved back into the New Age culture. Nowadays it keeps a distance from the New Age. After all, according to the FWBO itself, 'The Buddhist concern with Truth is fundamentally at odds with the eclecticism and relativism of the New Age and Buddhists have to make distinctions between teachings and traditions which the New Age is happy to mix together' (Vishvapani, 1994: 17).

The FWBO focuses on both individual development and spiritual fellowship. It emphasises concern for the welfare of others, and the members try to obtain enlightenment, the perfect wisdom and compassion. Through meditation, they will obtain strengthened feelings of universal loving-kindness as well as immediate benefits. Numerous members take advantage of living together with congenial members who are trying to transform themselves through Buddhism. The communal living offers a supportive environment for spiritual practice.

[7] [View of the FWBO, Vishvapani] As with the New Age, so attitudes to Christianity have changed in the FWBO. I do not think the FWBO has an antipathy to Christianity.

Therefore, the FWBO can be classed by both the second and the third categories of the typology provided by Wilson (see p.17, 18 in this thesis) in that it values enlightenment, communal living and spiritual fellowship, and thus 'ultimate salvation and knowledge comes from the liberation of powers within the self' and 'real salvation is attained by belonging to a sacred community, whose life-style and concerns are utterly divergent from those of worldly people' (Wilson, 1976: 63). In the typology provided by Wallis (see p.18-20 in this thesis) it can be categorised as a world-affirming movement since it emphasises enlightenment and individual development, and offers immediate benefits through meditation.

I will now turn to the social composition of the Jesus Army and the FWBO in chapter 5, in order to discuss its influence on members' attitudes and values.

5. Social composition of the Jesus Army and the FWBO

Altruistic acts require the presence of others and therefore altruism does not exist independently from social relationships. Attitudes and values are related to social background, and the social composition of NRMs reflects the backgrounds of those who join them. It is, therefore, important in this thesis to examine the social composition of NRMs. When it comes to the social aspects of NRMs and the functions of NRMs in the social dimension, it is important to take a look at not only the features of the movements but also the members of the movements and particularly their individual characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and social background.

The preceding two chapters made a contribution to an understanding of the Jesus Army and the FWBO in terms of their specific history in the UK and more generally. In this chapter, there will be a further analysis of the two movements by looking at their social composition. This chapter will also deal with the conversion and affiliation to both the movements. It is expected that this will facilitate a better understanding of attitudes and values of the members towards altruism.

A major difficulty encountered while undertaking research on NRMs is that of finding indicators of their size and composition. As Wilson and Dobbelaere noted (1994: 38), there are two main reasons: (1) NRMs are secretive or at the very least reluctant to provide information on such matters, and (2) NRMs are frequently badly organised which means that they themselves have little idea of the social parameters of their organisations. Moreover, as Clarke (1997) points out, it is difficult to have a clear grasp of the size of membership partly because the definition of membership of NRMs takes different forms according to movements. The precise boundaries of membership of NRMs are sometimes unclear. I have encountered some problems in this area, but, as I have already mentioned, both the Jesus Army and the FWBO have been helpful and provided me with the information which I asked for.

Demographic data

In this section of demographic data, both the Jesus Army and the FWBO are dealt with in parallel for purposes of comparison. According to the Jesus Army itself, it had 649 people living in community houses all over the UK in 1998. Among them, 492 were members and 157 were the children of members. The Jesus Army does not regard anyone under 15 years old as a member. There were about 300 non-residential active members who did not participate in the disciplines of communal living. In addition, about one thousand people are in contact with the Jesus Army. Altogether, about 2,500 people are involved in the Jesus Army in many different ways all over the UK. The FWBO itself claims that it has ordained about 800 members by 1998 all over the world; the core membership of the FWBO in the UK is around 2,000 (about four hundred Order members and over 1,500 mitras). Around 4,000 people visit regularly one of the FWBO centres in the UK.

Gender

Table 5.1 indicates the proportion of gender in the Jesus Army. According to data from the Jesus Army, there were 55.3 per cent male and 44.7 per cent female out of a total of 492 members living in 48 community houses all over the UK in 1998. Whilst there were 51.4 per cent male and 48.6 per cent female out of 35 members living in community houses in London, 38 respondents of my questionnaire survey among participants in the Sunday services in London had a 39.5 per cent male response and a 60.5 per cent female response rate. However, a random count of participants in Sunday worship of the Jesus Army recorded no difference in the number of men and women. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suppose that female members had more time to fill in the questionnaire and that some male members were too busy in organising the service, or male members might have been more sceptical about research carried out by an outsider.

Table 5.1

Gender in the Jesus Army

	Community in UK	Community in London	Sample in London
Male	272 (55.3)	18 (51.4)	15 (39.5)
Female	220 (44.7)	17 (48.6)	23 (60.5)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Table 5.2

Gender in the FWBO

	Order members	Order members in London	Sample of Order members & mitras in London
Male	574 (77.0)	80 (72.7)	30 (42.9)
Female	172 (23.0)	30 (27.3)	40 (57.1)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Table 5.2 indicates the proportion of gender in the FWBO. According to the data supplied by the FWBO itself, there were 77.0 per cent male Order members out of a total of 746 Order members in its ordination data in 1998[1]. This includes Order members in India, where there are very few female Order members from the west. Although it is not too far from the truth to say that the gender proportion of Order members in India was the main cause of the male predominance, there were 72.7 per cent male Order members out of a total of 110 Order members in London in the data in 1998. However, 70 respondents of Order members and mitras in my questionnaire survey in London had a 42.9 per cent male response and a 57.1 per

[1] These figures are affected by deaths and resignation. In the UK, the FWBO has 62 men's community houses and 26 women's community houses.

cent female response and a random count of participants in the meditation classes and events of the FWBO recorded no difference in the number of men and women.

In the case of the Jesus Army, men are predominant in community houses in terms of both numbers and authority. The Jesus Army has a special event just for men called 'Men Alive for God ' which women are not allowed to attend. This event is held twice a year. There are seminars in this event which cover such topics as 'marriage and celibacy', 'baptising and training disciples', and 'discovering and using your gifts'. Over 600 men over fifteen years old attend this event every year. Leaders of community houses are usually men. In terms of not only the number of the members but also the authority in community houses, men are dominant. In contrast, the FWBO claims that it regards men and women as equal. Although the FWBO initially seems to have had more male members, the FWBO has tried to encourage more female members to get ordained these days. The founder of the FWBO, Sangharakshita (1992a: 19) says: 'the Western Buddhist Order is an Order of both men and women, who are admitted on equal terms. Men and women receive the same ordination, engage in the same spiritual practices, and undertake the same organizational responsibilities.' In spite of this policy of equality, 'the practice does not always match the theory, and some members express disquiet at the under-representation of women in the higher echelons and the perceived reluctance of the movement's leader Sangharakshita to ordain women' (Puttick, 1999: 144)[2] (see p.174 for one interviewee's complaint).

Overall, both the movements are not like most if not all other NRMs which tend to have a higher percentage of female members than male members (cf. Wilson

[2] [View of the FWBO, Vishvapani] I do not know this source, but I would ask on what evidence this statement is made. I have never encountered these 'expressions of disquiet' nor this 'perception of reluctance'. Sangharakshita is no longer involved in conducting ordinations and has passed the responsibility for ordaining women onto women Order members.

& Dobbelaere, 1994: 42, 43; Puttick, 1994: 55)[3]. On the other hand, Barker points out:

> Membership of 'respectable' religious bodies in Britain is predominantly female, but full-time membership of new religious movements is heavily weighted in favour of men . . . In the case of the Unification church two-thirds of those attending workshops, two-thirds of all British full-time members . . . are male (1983: 44).

Regarding full-time members, this view of Barker seems to conform to both the Jesus Army and the FWBO.

Age

Table 5.3 and 5.4 set out the distributions of age. Of the respondents in the sample of the Jesus Army, the mean age is 31.7 years old and the median age is 30 years old. In the case of the FWBO, the mean age of the sample is 39.7 years old (mitras 40.0 years old; Order members 39.4 years old) and the median age is 37 years old. The members in the FWBO tend to be older people. Out of a total of 601 Order members, the mean age is 46.1 years old, and the median age is 45 years old. This means they grew up in the period of the 1960s counter-culture and the following decade. Although I found in my participant observation that there were a number of young adult visitors attending meditation classes in both the London Buddhist Centre and the North London Buddhist Centre, it would seem that when it comes to Sangha of both mitras and Order members, these followers tend to be middle-aged people.

Robbin (1988: 10) notes that 'the "New age" groups appear increasingly to appeal primarily to middle age adults.' In the Rajneesh movement world wide the largest age group was between 30 to 40 years old (48.7 %) and only 13.9 % were under 26 years old (Puttick, 1994: 56). On the other hand, Barker (1983: 43) points

[3] Whilst numerous sociological studies demonstrated a higher proportion of women than of men in religious participation, no differences were found between women and men in other studies (Warburg et al., 1999).

out that 'Those who commit themselves to full-time membership of the new religious movements tend to be young . . . The average age of British Moonies is 26, the average age of joining being 23.' This view of Barker does not seem to conform to the case of the FWBO. The most likely explanation is the fact that it takes usually seven to ten years to be ordained after first contact with the FWBO.

Table 5.3

Age distribution in the Jesus Army

Age categories	Community members in the UK	Sample in London
Younger than 30	160 (32.5)	19 (50.0)
30–39	103 (20.9)	10 (26.3)
40–49	153 (31.1)	7 (18.4)
50 or over	76 (15.5)	2 (5.3)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Table 5.4

Age distribution in the FWBO

Age categories	Order members in the UK	Sample in London
Younger than 30	8 (1.3)	4 (5.7)
30–39	146 (24.3)	34 (48.6)
40–49	256 (42.6)	23 (32.8)
50 or over	191 (31.8)	9 (12.9)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Membership and years in the movement

Table 5.5 indicates the respondents' duration of membership in the movements. Table 5.6 shows the categories of respondents to the questionnaire survey in London: style 1, 2, 3, 4[4], and non-covenant members of the Jesus Army.

Table 5.5

Years in the movement

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Less than 1 year	5 (14.7)	2 (2.9)
1-less than 3 years	9 (26.5)	5 (7.1)
3-less than 5 years	7 (20.6)	13 (18.6)
5-less than 10 years	8 (23.5)	23 (32.9)
Over 10 years	5 (14.7)	27 (38.5)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Table 5.6

Members' category of the Jesus Army

Style 1	8 (21.1)
Style 2	1 (2.6)
Style 3	17 (44.7)
Style 4	3 (7.9)
Non-covenant	9 (23.7)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Table 5.7 shows the categories of mitras and Order members' sample of the FWBO in London with the life-style of living 'in' or 'outside' community houses. Of the respondents in the sample of the Jesus Army, the mean duration in the

[4] See chapter three or Glossary.

movement is 5.7 years and the median duration is 4 years. In the case of the FWBO, the mean duration of the sample is 8.7 years and the median duration is 8 years. The respondents of the FWBO tend to have much longer memberships of the movement than those of the Jesus Army.

Table 5.7

Members' category of the FWBO	
Mitra living in community	24 (34.8)
Mitra living outside community	23 (33.3)
Order member living in community	13 (18.8)
Order member living outside community	9 (13.1)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Geographical distribution and nationality

Table 5.8 shows the number of the Jesus Army community houses and the resident members. Although the Jesus Army had 649 people living in community houses all over the UK in 1998, of which 492 were members and the rest, 157 were the children of members. Hence, Table 5.8 shows the geographical distribution of 492 members. The distribution shows the spread of the movement in the UK. In the UK, the FWBO has 22 urban Buddhist centres, 8 retreat centres and 25 meeting groups without permanent premises[5]. Table 5.9 provides data in London, Birmingham, Cambridge, Manchester and Glasgow. Although it is not possible to provide a detailed account of the geographical distribution of the FWBO because of the lack of information, geographically the FWBO centres seem to be fairly evenly spread in terms of North-South, urban settings.

[5] Globally, there are 68 Buddhist centres including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Holland, India, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, and the USA, 17 retreat centres and 38 meeting groups.

Table 5.8

Resident members and community houses of the Jesus Army

	Members	Houses
Birmingham	39	3
Brighton	19	2
Coventry	50	5
Kettering	19	2
Leicester	32	3
London	35	2
Manchester	16	2
Milton Keynes	10	1
Northampton	234	22
Norwich	6	1
Oxford	10	2
Sheffield	16	2
Stoke on Trent	6	1

Table 5.9

Order members and community houses of the FWBO

	Order members	Men's community houses	Women's community houses
London	110	11	6
Birmingham	35	4	1
Cambridge	55	9	4
Manchester	22	3	1
Glasgow	14	3	1

Table 5.10 displays the nationality of the respondents. In terms of percentage, both the movements consist mainly of British citizens[6].

Table 5.10

Nationality

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
British	25 (65.8)	54 (77.1)
Other Europeans	5 (13.2)	5 (7.1)
Asians	6 (15.8)	5 (7.1)
Americans	0 (0.0)	2 (2.9)
Africans	2 (5.3)	2 (2.9)
Other	0 (0.0)	2 (2.9)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

A random count of participants in Sunday worships of the Jesus Army in London recorded about 10 black people, or around 15 per cent[7]. The Jesus Army is organising 'Multiply Christian Network', which is a network of independent Christian churches and groups in the UK and overseas. It is a member of the Evangelical Alliance. The Multiply Central Offices are located in the premises of the Jesus Army in Northampton. Multiply Christian Network in London includes several churches and groups with black leaders and many black members[8]. The Jesus Army welcomes black people, and is strongly against racial discrimination.

The FWBO is also strongly against any discrimination. However, only about 5 per cent of a random count of participants in classes of the FWBO are black,

[6] In the case of SGI in the UK, 71.2 per cent were born in the UK (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 43).
[7] [View of the Jesus Army, John Campbell] Ethnic and national diversity is far higher in our London congregation than elsewhere.
[8] Soul Winners Church, Glad Tidings Evangelical Church, Flaming Evangelical Ministries, and Hope of Glory International Ministries.

in spite of the fact that there is a special meditation class for black people. As Table 5.10 indicates, the FWBO consists mainly of British citizens. From my participant observations, it is fair to say that most of them are white.

Marital status and celibacy

As Table 5.11 indicates, both the Jesus Army and the FWBO sample have much larger proportions of single people than the general public in the UK[9]. The FWBO where only 8.6 per cent of members are married conforms well to the view of Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994: 113) that 'new religions of exotic provenance have generally tended to recruit single individuals, many of whom have no relatives who share their conversion to the new persuasion.' Although the Jesus Army is not a new religion of 'exotic provenance', the high ratio of single people and small proportion of married members is also very unusual. In the case of the FWBO, there seems to be another reason for the high proportion of single members. Homosexuality is overwhelmingly regarded as acceptable and there seems to be a large number of gay people in the FWBO. We shall look at this in chapter six. Moreover, single-sex activities are another factor which explains the high ratio of single members and small proportion of married members in the FWBO. The absence of a marriage bond and the high ratio of single members can militate against the durability of the movements. Wilson and Dobbelaere note:

> The extent to which a movement is comprised of stable families must be assumed to have considerable importance of its durability, as well as for the transmission of ideas and values from one generation to the next, which is more easily done if those generations are parents and their own children (1994: 113, 114).

However, the absence of marriage can be advantageous; members can challenge and experiment new norms. The creativity may attract people.

[9] The data of the members of SGI in the UK are: Single 34.5%; Married 31.9%; Widowed 2.8%; Living as married 11.4%; Divorced or separated 11.4%; and No answer 2.0 %. These data and the UK national figures are based on the research of Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994: 114).

Table 5.11

Marital status (%)

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO	UK
Single	76.3	67.1	38
Married	13.2	8.6	51
Widowed	0.0	0.0	7
Living as married	2.6	8.6	
Divorced or separated	2.6	14.3	4
No answer	5.3	1.4	

Note: The categories are mutually exclusive, hence 'single' does not include 'widowed', 'divorced or separated'. The UK sample did not have 'living as married' and 'no answer' categories.

Table 5.12

Celibacy

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Male	8 (53.3)	10 (33.3)
Female	11 (47.8)	13 (32.5)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Another factor which explains the high ratio of single members and small proportion of married members is celibacy (Table 5.12). Of the questionnaire survey in the Jesus Army, 53.3 per cent of 15 male members are celibate and 47.8 per cent of 23 female members. There are seminars in the Jesus Army on marriage and celibacy, and special meetings just for celibates. There is a tradition of clerical

celibacy within Roman Catholicism[10]. Regarding celibacy in the Jesus Army, Puttick notes:

> [The Jesus Army perceives] marriage as the 'lower way', inferior to celibacy, which is promoted in *Celibate Cutting Edge*, their 'inspirational bulletin of celibacy'. In this respect the movement may be perceived as a militant version of the men's movement in which the men give up being 'feminised' and don combat gear as warriors for Jesus, also displaying misogynistic attitudes (1999: 153).

It is the case that celibacy has been respected in the Jesus Army and it has been encouraged. If not celibate, the men take the lead in forming relationships. It is a long process for style 3 members to start a courtship. They are carefully watched over and need prior permission from the community leaders to start a courtship. If a male member falls in love with a female member, he must go to his elder and tell him. If the woman is agreeable, the elder will then publicise the fact, so that any other man who might want to marry the same woman may make his desires known. This process does not apply to members other than style 3 members.

In the case of the FWBO, 33.3 per cent of 30 male members are celibate and 32.5 per cent of 40 female members. The proportion of Order members who are celibate is higher than that of mitras: 40.9 per cent compared with 29.8 per cent[11]. Celibacy has been respected in the Buddhist tradition and the FWBO encourages celibacy[12].

Educational background

According to *Living in Britain: Results from the 1994 General Household Survey*, the proportion of people aged between 16 to 69 with no qualifications was 32

[10] By using data based on 1294 evangelical ministers, most of whom were married, and 80 Roman Catholic priests in Canada, Don Swenson (1998) concluded that being a celibate did not make a significant difference to one's spiritual life and that in regards to one's devotional life and time for ministry, celibacy does not appear to matter.

[11] [View of the FWBO, Vishvapani] I find these figures too high.

[12] Some celibate Order members wear a golden-yellow 'kesa', which comprise around 5 per cent of Order members. The other Order members practise celibacy without making a formal commitment to it, and they wear a white kesa (see p.88).

per cent and 10 per cent had first or higher degrees. The participation rate in higher education in all social classes in the UK was 34 per cent (Social Trends 1999 edition: p.61). The results of my survey relating to the educational standard of the Jesus Army and the FWBO members are shown in Table 5.13. The two surveys mentioned above are not, of course, comparable with my survey because they employ different criteria. However, they do help us see the educational standard of the members of both the movements in the context of the general population of the UK.

Table 5.13

Highest educational qualification

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Higher degree	2 (5.3)	17 (24.3)
First degree	12 (31.6)	34 (48.6)
A level	5 (13.2)	11 (15.7)
GCSE, O level, CSE	14 (36.8)	6 (8.6)
None	5 (13.2)	2 (2.8)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

First, over 70 per cent of the sample of the FWBO obtained first or higher degrees, and it is obvious that there is a much higher proportion of highly qualified people among the sample of the FWBO than the general public in the UK. This conforms to other studies on NRMs (Puttick, 1994; Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994; Barker, 1983, 1995). Although the FWBO has a more or less Asian Buddhist tradition, Sangharakshita, the founder of the FWBO has adopted Buddhism in a way that is peculiarly suitable for the Western people living in modern society. There are, however, still numerous new concepts and terms for the Western people, which require newcomers a certain intellectual capacity to enable them to understand.

Such capacity is perhaps more likely to be found in the more highly educated[13]. Possibly some of them are also more likely to have been familiar with some of the Buddhist terms and concepts before they came across the FWBO. Secondly, 36.9 per cent of the sample of the Jesus Army obtained first or higher degrees and consequently it is not the case that compared with the population as a whole the members of the Jesus Army are badly educated. Although it is the case that the Jesus Army evangelises homeless people, some of them may be educated and it evangelises students as well.

We shall now look at the last demographic data, present occupation.

Present occupation

As previously mentioned in chapters three and four, both the Jesus Army and the FWBO have businesses. Whilst the Jesus Army runs farms, health foods shops and garage, the FWBO has 'right livelihood businesses' such as health foods shops, vegetarian restaurants and gifts shops. Some of the members work for those business linked to the movements, and others work outside the movements. Table 5.14 shows their present occupations.

Almost half of the FWBO sample are engaged in work linked to the FWBO. They are able to share much time with other members and pursue the religious life, using the teachings as the basis of living. Rachel, a 44-year-old Order member, recounts her motivation to join a business of the FWBO:

> I decided to actually come and work in one of the Buddhist businesses and I felt I wanted to get to know people more fully in the Sangha. I was in a situation where a lot of my friends up to that point weren't at all interested in me having learnt to meditate. They weren't at all interested in Buddhism. A lot of my friends were very politically minded, as I was then, and they had no religious feeling. I think they

[13] In the case of SGI in the UK, almost 24 per cent had attended university. Wilson and Dobbelaere analysed this by saying: 'the teachings demand literate intelligence, a willingness to study, and lack of fear in the face of unfamiliar concepts and languages' (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 122, 123).

> just thought it rather strange that I had developed this interest in meditation and Buddhism. I suppose I was finding it harder to talk to my friends about what I was learning and what I was understanding and gaining from meditation and Buddhism. I felt it would be good to work with other people who were Buddhists so I could get a stronger sense of what Buddhism was and also what this movement was. I chose to give up my job and joined one of the FWBO businesses (F8).

Table 5.14

Present occupation

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Work linked to the movement	11 (28.9)	29 (43.9)
Work not linked to the movement	15 (39.5)	22 (33.3)
Self-employed	2 (5.3)	10 (15.3)
Unemployed	5 (13.2)	1 (1.5)
Retired	1 (2.6)	2 (3.0)
Full-time student	2 (5.3)	1 (1.5)
Housewife (not otherwise employed)	2 (5.3)	1 (1.5)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

The work linked to the FWBO takes on a different meaning from work not linked to the FWBO. Work that is driven by the demands of the religious teachings enables the members to practise it as an integral part of daily life[14]. An Order member, Monica in her sixties explains:

> We have to work and earn a living, and what we are doing in the FWBO is establishing conditions where people can work ethically and work with other Buddhists. The FWBO offers jobs to people who are just learning about a different way of life. We really are establishing an

[14] 'Some Jehovah's Witnesses have chosen to take up work in which they can be their own bosses, even at the cost of loss of income, in order to be free to undertake proselytizing activities' (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 118, 119). On the other hand, 31.8 per cent of the SGI members in the UK were self-employed, and Wilson and Dobbelaere interpret this to mean that: 'The Soka Gakkai members tend rather to see self-employment as an arena in which to experience the benefits of their religion, which is expected to open new opportunities for success rather than to close them' (ibid.: 119).

> entirely different way of life - living in communities, being able to work in livelihood jobs, working with teams (F9).

The Jesus Army also has a special meaning of work. The members' work is a vocation from God. Liam in his forties is working for the Jesus Army as one of the organisers. He considers his work as a vocation. He used to be a teacher in various schools, and for much of his life he had a job outside the Jesus Army while living in a community house of the Jesus Army. Liam says:

> Over the last couple of years I have begun to work within the community [house] as well as living in it full time. So my life is very much more embedded in the church. I don't have so much contact outside. Sometimes I miss that actually, but I can see that God has called me to do this job and I am very happy to do it (J13).

Horatio also lives in a community house of the Jesus Army. He works for the London Underground from Monday to Friday. He says 'Normally we don't work weekends because we commit ourselves to the church. We have meetings on Saturdays and Sundays' (J21). The members of the Jesus Army control their circumstances as much as possible according to the teachings and God's will.

The Jesus Army recruits new members from homeless people on the street. This may be the reason why the ratio of unemployed in the Jesus Army sample is much higher than that of the FWBO[15].

We have finished looking at all the demographic data. Let us leave these and turn to the religious background and conversion of the members.

Religious background and conversion

Some members were born into the Judaeo-Christian tradition, some were born into families where religion was not practised, some were born into atheist families, and some have parents of different religions. Some have changed their

[15] 11.1 per cent of the labour force in the UK in 1998 were self-employed and 6.1 per cent were unemployed (*Social Trends 29*, 1999 edition: 72).

religious allegiance a few times of their own accord, or through the influence of siblings, friends and school. With a view to finding out the previous religious affiliation of respondents, they were asked in the questionnaire survey, 'Before joining this movement, did you regard yourself as belonging to any religious movements or churches?' (Table 5.15).

Table 5.15

Religious background

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Christianity	18 (47.4)	17 (24.3)
Buddhism	0 (0.0)	2 (2.9)
Other	0 (0.0)	3 (4.3)
None	20 (52.6)	48 (67.6)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

47.4 per of the Jesus Army sample had a Christian background and 52.6 per cent did not regard themselves as having belonged to any religious movement or church before. In the case of the FWBO, 24.3 per cent had a Christian background and 67.6 per cent did not regard themselves as belonging to any religious movement or church[16]. For over half the respondents of both the movements, affiliation to their movement was not a conversion from other religions but their first religious affiliation.

Although there seems to be no single pattern for the first encounter with NRMs and conversion into them, Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994: 49) note that 'there is always a sequence in which exposure occurs, interest is evoked, and commitment elicited.' Moreover, the converts choose NRMs. Wilson notes:

[16] In the case of SGI in the UK, 76 per cent of the respondents said that they had not belonged to any religious organisation before they joined SGI (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 79).

> If religion now subserves private and individual functions rather than social functions, so we may suppose that individuals are now more aware of those functions, because they so much more consciously choose to be religious. . . . it becomes increasingly relevant for sociologists to explore the meaning of these choices with survey techniques (1988: 210).

The ways in which people first encounter NRMs show the character of the NRMs, whilst the reasons of the converts for choosing them show the character of the converts. Clarke notes:

> [NRMs seek to provide] the solutions to ordinary, everyday, problems. It would seem to be the case for many who join these movements, and no doubt for others as well, that ordinary life is not easy to handle and that they require a philosophy, a practice and a ritual that will enable them to cope with everyday concerns. . . and many more of what Durkheim would describe as 'profane' matters. These religions [NRMs] deal with the nitty gritty of everyday life (Clarke ed., 1987: 9, 10).

This study showed various everyday concerns of members. We shall look at them later in this section. Table 5.16 indicates how members first encountered the Jesus Army and the FWBO.

Table 5.16

First encounter

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Family	7 (18.4)	6 (8.6)
A friend	11 (28.9)	20 (28.6)
A casual acquaintance	1 (2.6)	4 (5.7)
A work colleague	1 (2.6)	2 (2.9)
A member on the streets	9 (23.7)	0 (0.0)
Literature or publicity	3 (7.9)	30 (42.9)
An event	4 (10.5)	2 (2.9)
Other	2 (5.4)	6 (8.4)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

52.5 per cent encountered the Jesus Army through family, friends, casual acquaintances, or work colleagues. The equivalent figure for the FWBO sample is 45.8 per cent. Both cases confirm the view expressed by Clarke that 'personal contact between the evangelizer and the potential recruit accounts for a majority of the conversions in the case of many new religions' (Clarke ed., 1987: 7)[17].

42.9 per cent in the FWBO sample first encountered the FWBO through the movement's own literature or publicity. This is remarkably high, compared with the 7.9 per cent in the Jesus Army sample. Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994: 49-50) note that 'a movement sponsoring a relatively impersonal technique of mental therapy, such as Scientology, is likely to put more emphasis on literature and publicity than on personal introductions.' Although it seems that the FWBO is not very keen on evangelisation, it attracts a large number of people through its literature and publicity on meditation and Buddhism. We shall look at this later.

Barker (1995a: 22) points out that 'By no means all conversions are sudden. Some take place slowly over months or even years so that the convert finds it difficult to point to a specific time when he or she first started seeing the world in a different way.' Indeed, most of the converts into both the movements experienced a long process of conversion. Let us look at the conversions and affiliations, firstly the Jesus Army and then the FWBO.

Conversion and affiliation to the Jesus Army

As previously mentioned, the Jesus Army recruits new members from homeless people on the street. 23.7 per cent of the sample actually encountered the Jesus Army on the street. Scott, a 27-year-old non-covenant member, actually met one of the members whilst he was living as a homeless person on the street when he

[17] In the case of SGI in the UK, 94 per cent of the respondents encountered it through family, friends, casual acquaintances, or work colleagues (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 79). This percentage also confirms well this view.

was fifteen years old. He recalls 'I had just left Scotland and ended up homeless on the streets of London. I met the Jesus Army on the street and found a sense of belonging to something, friendship, brotherhood' (J17).

Howard, a 32-year-old style 3 member, also encountered the Jesus Army on the street. He describes himself at the time as a football hooligan and an alcoholic. His brother was a Christian, and always spoke to him about Jesus. Howard used to respond by saying 'Oh, go away from me, rubbish, you don't know what you are talking about, you know, but my religion, my God is football' (J11). Although he never followed Jesus in any sense, five years ago, while homeless, Howard one day just cried out 'God if you are there, you have got to help me, because I am going to die, 'cause I've got no food and I've got no money, and I can't take this any more' (J11). A member of the Jesus Army came to him about half an hour later, and she prayed with him and then brought him something to eat. Howard says 'we sat down and we talked, and then I talked with some other people. And they brought me back, just to stay for a little while, and I decided that I wanted to stay at their community house' (J11).

A 43-year-old style 3 member, Liam living in a community house of the Jesus Army encountered the Jesus Army through friends and had a conversion experience 'over quite a period of time.' Liam was brought up as a Catholic, although by the time he was eleven or twelve years old he was disillusioned by it, and had come to regard it as hypocritical. Then he came to reject religion in his teenage years and wanted nothing to do with it, although he had 'a basic belief in God'. However, God was 'a remote God' whom he had no relationship with or real understanding of. When Liam went to university, he met a group of friends who were going to the Jesus Fellowship Church at Bugbrooke. He remembers the very first meeting:

> I went to the chapel, there was a powerful atmosphere of real love. There was something very special about it. I was hit by it. I was terrified at the same time of what I saw because it was so alien to my Christian experience. That was a packed chapel of 200 to 300 people. The atmosphere was electric. It was powerful, fresh and inspirational.

> The people were obviously genuine. You could see that straight away. There was a real love there. What really struck me was that you could see that there were lives that had been changed. I started to go regularly and I started to talk to some of these people. They had been into all sorts of things - drugs, drink, homeless - and they had been genuinely changed (J13).

He was baptised a few weeks later. Liam recalls that 'it was a very powerful baptism. I was filled with the Holy Spirit and it was an unforgettable moment, a life changing moment really. That was the beginning of it' (J13). He built a friendship with other members and he used to travel up from university two or three times a week before he became a community member.

Another case of encounter with the Jesus Army through a friend is that of a 23-year-old style 1 member, Meg. When one of her friends became a member of the Jesus Army, Meg was already a Christian, having left a Christian rehabilitation centre for drug and alcohol abuse. She was looking for a church and 'tried the Jesus Army'. Meg says, 'I thought it was a bit strange at first. The way the Jesus Army worshipped was a bit odd at first, the lights and weird music was not the sort of church I was used to. But I soon got used to it' (J7). She recalls its attraction of that time, 'What really attracted me was the sincerity of the people, and the obvious love and bonding that they had with each other. I wanted to be part of it and the life that I could get from it' (J7). Many of the interviewees mention the characteristics of the members as caring, friendly and loving.

A 30-year-old style 1 member, Helen is one of those interviewees. She was baptised a Catholic, but when she was nine years old, her mother decided not to go to church any more because she did not really believe in it, and Helen ceased to attend church since then, too. She encountered the Jesus Army in a night-club. Helen used to go to a night-club at Charing Cross quite often and the Jesus Army also used to go there on Friday nights to wash people's feet, pray with people and talk to those who wanted to talk. Helen took the telephone number of one of them and later phoned up and attended a Sunday night meeting.

> I came and it was an amazing time. I came maybe the next Sunday night, and then I wouldn't come for a few weeks. Then I would come

> for a few weeks again, then I wouldn't come for a while again. It was very spasmodic. Slowly I came more and was away less (J22).

The case of Helen was different from that of other members presented above. It took a longer time for Helen to get involved in the Jesus Army. Nevertheless, she continued to visit the Jesus Army. What made her keep contact with them? Helen says:

> The Holy Spirit is here. The people are very loving and very caring and very accepting of you. You don't have to change to come here in any way, you come as you are, and you are accepted as you are. A lot of young people, as well as old, come here. It is a very charismatic and alive church. I wouldn't like to go to a church where you just sit down quietly and you can't enjoy yourself in an outrageous way. In this church you can really do anything that you like. You find a freedom to be yourself with God's help in your life (J22).

Drusilla, a style 2 member, encountered the Jesus Army at an event in 1993. She says, 'When I was living in Camden, London, there was a big campaign going on in Willesden, and one lunchtime I went on board one of their buses and met some of the sisters who began talking about Jesus, and I came to know Jesus that day' (J3). At that time she was searching for something in life, the meaning of life: 'there had to be something more because I felt an emptiness inside, and that my life was without purpose, there had to be something deeper, a reason why we were living. Since I have found Jesus I do feel that there is purpose in my life, and the feelings inside are different' (J3).

Duncan, a 43-year-old style 2 member, was also searching for something deeper when he encountered the Jesus Army. He has been a member of the Jesus Army for five years, before that he was connected with the Church of England, but Duncan says, 'my wife and I were looking for something deeper for ourselves and our two children. We were longing for greater spiritual depth' (J1). By chance his wife happened to pick up one of the Jesus Army magazines in a local library. They looked through it and got very excited. He thought 'wouldn't it be nice if there were one in London,' but the magazine did not mention a branch in London. They rang directory enquiries and discovered that there was a branch in Acton. Duncan

recalls, 'We rang and asked some questions, for example, "Does this Church speak in tongues, does it praise God in spirit?" The reply was "Yes". We were so excited that the following day we came to this Church' (J1). They felt that they found a home straight away. Duncan says:

> I have found a church which accepts me completely as I am. Sadly, in a lot of other churches that I came across it was very difficult for me to be myself, which I found very disconcerting. What I found in the Jesus Army was a church which accepts all people from all walks of life, people who take drugs, people who are homeless, the disabled, and so on. All nationalities were also accepted, and as my wife is black, from the West Indies, that was important. We were accepted the way we were, and because of this acceptance we found we grew spiritually, very quickly (J1).

Sally, a 34-year-old style 1 member, is an example of a religious seeker. She became a Born Again Christian in 1984, and then went to the Church of England, the Baptist Church, from one church to another until she finally visited the Jesus Army and decided to join it in 1988. Sally talks about the reasons for deciding to stop shopping around churches and join the Jesus Army:

> I think the love really. The sincerity and a reality of people. Whereas the other churches that I had been to didn't have as much openness. You are not just there for yourself; you are there to give to other people. I suppose it is providing a service, but in a religious way if you like, or in a spiritual way. It is radical. It doesn't matter what you do, your heart can be radical without having to do things. God looks at your heart, not what you do for Him (J23).

Flora, a 40-year-old style 3 member, is another example of a religious seeker. She had the first contact with the Jesus Army 22 years ago, when she was a student and involved with the Christian Union at university. Before that she had visited many churches such as House Fellowships, Baptist churches, United Reformed, Pentecostal and others, but she did not join any of them because she did not feel at home. She was looking for a radical church which was really committed. She says, 'I had felt that as a Christian I wanted to be a whole hearted Christian, not a lukewarm Sundays only sort of Christian' (J4). Flora recalls, 'there was a televised programme which I heard about, although I did not see it, I was a student

at that time and a friend of mine at university also recommended the Jesus Army, so I came for my first visit about that time' (J4). After she finished her university course she decided to move into one of the community houses of the Jesus Army. Flora talks about its attraction at that time: 'The spiritual power that I felt here, also the sense of family, the brotherhood. When I came here I thought that this was the church for me, because it is a church which has that commitment' (J4).

Paul, a 25-year-old style 3 member, encountered the Jesus Army through his sister seven years ago. The Jesus Army was having an 'outreach' in Birmingham and they were giving out street papers. At that time his sister was looking for a new church, and she started going to the Jesus Fellowship in Birmingham, and then his father went to a meeting. Paul says, 'I saw a change in my Dad, and then my brother went to a meeting. I got invited to a celebration event. That is how I found the Church, which was a normal celebration, nothing spectacular' (J10). At first, he was not attracted to the Jesus Army. Paul recalls, 'I had been to a few Churches before. They looked the same to me, but there was this point at which I could not progress, and I think it was myself, not letting God into my own life' (J10). However, Paul found 'a need for God' in the Jesus Army, and that led him to repentance. He was baptised and became a member of the Jesus Army.

Moira, a 20-year-old student, has grown up in one of the community houses of the Jesus Army since the age of eight. Before that her parents were Christians and went to a Baptist church. Her parents divorced when she was seven and she lived with her mother and sister for about a year before they moved into one of the community houses. Moira talks about the first impression, 'Lots of people, a big house. I suppose because my mum and dad had just split up I felt quite upset about it. There were lots of children there that were about my age and that helped me then' (J15). It was not her choice to join the Jesus Army. She recalls, 'I just came because my mum came. I don't remember thinking I had a choice, but I didn't mind. I was happy about it, because it was where my friends were and I wanted to

be with my friends. But I don't remember thinking I had any option at the time' (J15). However, it was not automatic for her to become a covenant member. She says, 'When you get older you make your own decision. When I was fifteen I began to think about what I did want, why I was here. I decided that even if my mum weren't here I would still want to be' (J15). She was baptised at the age of fifteen and is still an active member, but her mother left the Jesus Army last year.

Joanna, a 25-year-old style 3 member, encountered the Jesus Army by chance. Before she moved to London, she had 'a very happy secure kind of upbringing in a village in Cornwall'. It was not a particularly Christian upbringing, although her mother was a Christian. Her father was not religious and she was not forced into going to church. However, she went to Sunday school until she was about ten years old. Then Joanna thought that 'it was a bit naff' and she stopped going to Sunday school. She had been studying art in Cornwall, and moved to London to study when she was nineteen. One of her friends was staying at one of the community houses of the Jesus Army and said that Joanna could stay there. Joanna had not really thought much about it, but when she was looking for accommodation she telephoned her to see if she could stay. Joanna says, 'I felt really nervous about coming up to London for the first time, and I was suddenly in London about to meet this church that I had never met before. I thought "I am totally crazy, what am I doing here?" I just hoped that the first person I met would be really friendly and welcoming' (J24). She telephoned the Jesus Army from a tube station and a few members came to pick her up from the station. Her first impression of the Jesus Army was 'one of great relief'. Joanna says:

> They were very warm and I had a sense of feeling like I could wind down and be at home. I had had experiences of quite lively worship before. I had been to Christian music festivals where I had experienced spirit filled worship, so that the worship in the Jesus Army wasn't a shock to me. I think I just remember feeling quite touched by the warmth. After I had spent the weekend I went home on the coach and bought the book "Fire in Our Hearts" and I started to read it straight away. I was always laughing to myself while I was reading it. I just wanted to tell everybody how amazing it was. I felt like I had found a little haven in the middle of the City (J24).

After that she went to college in Wimbledon and found another charismatic church. She thought 'it would be sensible to find a church close to where I was studying'. Even though she started going there, she kept in contact with the Jesus Army. The summer before she moved to London, she felt God challenging her. Joanna says:

> I had lived a bit of a compromised life as a Christian. I became a Christian when I was seventeen. So when I came to London it was almost like I was hungry for something a bit more radical. I decided that if I wanted to be a Christian I should really want to be one, rather than just one foot in the world and one foot in the church. I was being drawn here [the Jesus Army] really (J24).

It was in October 1992 and it was not until the following February that she actually became a covenant member of the Jesus Army. Joanna was gradually going to the Jesus Army more and more between that time.

Conversion and affiliation to the FWBO

Sangharakshita (1994: 17) states 'Going for Refuge is the simplest, almost the most elementary, aspect of conversion in Buddhism . . .' Going for Refuge is a conversion 'from an ordinary mundane way of life to a spiritual, even a transcendental, way of life' (Sangharakshita, 1994: 28). More specifically, Sangharakshita notes:

> it [Going for Refuge: conversion in Buddhism] consists of three distinct processes of turning around: firstly from limited ideals to an absolute, transcendental ideal; secondly from . . . little systems . . . to a path based on unchanging spiritual principles and truths; and thirdly from meaningless worldly contact to meaningful communication (1994: 28).

Like the Jesus Army, the processes of conversion to the FWBO are also varied. As mentioned previously, the FWBO attracts a large number of people through its literature and publicity on meditation and Buddhism. Many of the converts seem to have been intellectually attracted to the movement[18]. However, many of them

[18] These fall into the intellectual category of the conversion motifs model presented by Lofland and Skonovd (1981). The model consists of six motifs of conversion: intellectual, mystical, experimental, affectional, revivalist and coercive. The 'intellectual' mode of conversion is the

went to the Buddhist centre of the FWBO to attend classes and the encounters with the members in the centre were their drives to join the FWBO. Michael is an example of this phenomenon. He is a 58-year-old mitra and works at the North London Buddhist Centre three days a week. He contacted the London Buddhist Centre in 1989 through an advertisement. He says, 'because I was just interested in Buddhism and I always had an interest in what was happening in Tibet, the political situation there and I decided that I would find out a little bit more about Buddhism' (F18). He attended an 'Introduction to Buddhism' course, and then an 'Introduction to Meditation' course. Michael recalls, 'I liked the individuals whom I met. When I got to know them, and it took a little while, I liked their honesty, their openness and their warmth. I suppose the fact they had something specific in their life. So, that attracted me, once I got to know them' (F18). Thus, Michael saw an advertisement and visited the FWBO without any relationship with its members, because he was intellectually motivated. However, what really attracted him was the characters of its members. Human contact is an important factor for new converts.

Stuart is another example. He is an Order member in his forties. Stuart and his brother encountered the FWBO through an advertisement for meditation. They went to the meditation course together. Stuart went to Sunday school when he was a child. He was confirmed at the age of fifteen, but shortly after that he broke away from the church. He says this was, 'because I didn't really think much about God or Christianity. I didn't find it very helpful' (F20). Then he spent many years searching:

> I was generally curious about things. There was a long period when nothing seemed to come up. I had wanted to find something. I had read a lot about philosophy and Hinduism. I wasn't interested in Buddhism, but I wanted to learn to meditate. I don't remember why (F20).

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case of people who pursue alternate theodicies, personal fulfilment by reading books, watching television, attending lectures and other impersonal ways.

Stuart talks about his first impression of the FWBO, 'it was a very friendly atmosphere. Very welcoming in many ways. People were very open. They didn't try to convert me on the spot; not trying to spoon-feed me some kind of philosophy. People were just interested in me as a human being, and I thought that was quite nice' (F20). Stuart started to feel the benefits soon: 'I just kept coming about once a week, just for a meditation evening. I gave meditation a three-month trial period, where I decided to do it every day, and if there was an effect after that that was fine, I would know it had worked' (F20).

Many converts to the FWBO were initially interested in meditation and then gradually took an interest in Buddhism itself. Caroline, a 36-year-old Order member, is one of them. She used to go to church twice a year when she was child. She went to India in the spring of 1988 and met people who were meditating. Caroline decided to learn to meditate. When she came back to England, she saw an advertisement for a meditation course run by the FWBO in Covent Garden. She was first interested in meditation and carried on meditating, but gradually became more interested in Buddhism as well. She then attended some Buddhism courses. After that she went to work at Bodywise, which is a team-based business of the FWBO, where she made friends with other members. Caroline says 'I got to know more about Buddhism in practice - what difference it was making in people's lives on a daily basis!' (F11). It was in 1990 that she became a mitra. Then Caroline joined one of the women's community houses in 1992. She looks back on the past and says:

> I was most aware of experiencing quite a lot of fear and anxiety. At the same time I was also investigating Psychotherapy and exploring alternative medicine, like homeopathy, working with massage and so on. I wanted to work more with my body and mind and to change my experience about fear and anxiety. I thought that meditation would help with that. Also my stepmother had died about a year earlier, so I had also had an experience of grief, which I think was also a factor making me want to explore what life was all about (F11).

Whilst many converts encountered the FWBO through advertisements, some were introduced to the FWBO through a friend. Lee, a 33-year- old mitra, is

one of them. He was brought up as a Catholic. When he was about fourteen years old, he decided that he did not want to remain so any more. Christianity did not have any meaning for him and so he decided to abandon religion. Lee says 'I suppose you could say my religion had turned into personal development. I looked at personal development books instead of practising religion' (F17). He encountered the FWBO in 1988. Lee says:

> I was working for a company in Croydon. A friend was going along to the meditation classes at lunchtime. I asked her where she was going one lunchtime and she told me she was going to meditation. As soon as she mentioned the word meditation something in my head responded. I started going with her. I went for about three years just learning meditation. I wasn't interested in Buddhism at all; I wasn't interested in religion in any way. I just went to learn how to become more positive and calmer (F17).

After going to the centre for about three years he had got to know quite a few people. He then picked up a book about Buddhism and read it. Lee found it interesting and decided to do a six-week course. After the first session, he thought the members in the centre were crazy. It was a course on The Wheel of Life - the realm of the gods and the realm of the animals. After that week, he decided he would not go back. But then he thought about all the people he knew there, Order members, mitras, and what a great time he had with them, and he decided that perhaps he was not hearing properly. Lee turned up for the rest of the course. He explains: 'they said that the world could be divided into these realms or that it could just be psychological states which we get into. We get into craving states, states where we feel superior like Gods, and we get into animal states' (F17). Once people have done a Buddhism course, they can go to regular classes at the centre. Lee followed this process. He recalls:

> the people there were so nice. I also started to get a little feel for the Buddha and began to like him. I read a few more of the books about the Buddha and I began to think I was a Buddhist. Quite a few people find that their thoughts want to grow and develop and Buddhism allows that (F17).

Ellen, a 41-year-old Order member, also met the FWBO through a friend. When she was a child, religion was 'one of the forbidden subjects'. Her father was an atheist and her mother was quietly Christian, but religion was never discussed because it caused difficulties between them. She was sent to Sunday school, but at the age of six she decided that God did not exist and left Sunday school after a few years. Ellen says, 'I was more like my father, probably more agnostic rather than atheist. I didn't know what there was, but I felt there was something there' (F24). In 1990 she encountered the FWBO through one of her friends with whom she was doing Tai Chi. The friend suggested that she should try meditation. At that time she was under much stress as a computer programmer. She had headaches and had been ill for a few years. She was looking at all sorts of alternative therapies to try to get well. Ellen recalls:

> I went along and as soon as I got there [the Norwich Buddhist Centre] I realised there was much more to it than just meditation and getting less stressed. I became very interested in Buddhism right from the very beginning. My first impression was that there were people who cared about other people. I was very struck by that. I had always felt very alone in the world before. There was a lot of friendliness. I was fairly overwhelmed by friendliness and interest, good humour and intelligence. People seemed very confident in themselves, certainly the Order members. I just saw these people who had something really special and I wanted it, too. I was very shy and not at all confident. I have changed very much (F24).

Within a few weeks she really wanted to be 'part of the FWBO'. Ellen confessed, 'In fact I wanted to be an Order member within a week or two of going to the centre, although I was advised not to be too hasty' (F24).

Whilst some of converts to the FWBO encountered it through their friends, some met it through a member of their own family. Sabina, a 36-year- old mitra, is one of them. She was not baptised, because her parents wanted her to be able to make the decision when she became older. Although they sent her to Sunday school, she left it at the age of thirteen. After that she had not belonged to any religious group, and then in 1993 she encountered the FWBO through her brother. At that time her brother lived in Norwich, and he had done a meditation course at the

Norwich Buddhist Centre. Sabina says, 'I suffered quite a lot from stress and anxiety and he said that meditation was good for that and that I could learn it here [the London Buddhist Centre], so I came along (F12). Of her first impression of the FWBO, Sabina says:

> I liked the way that the class was taught. I liked the fact that there wasn't an overtly Buddhist emphasis. When we went into the meditation room there was a big image of the Buddha, but it did seem quite straightforward. It was a class to learn meditation and there was no pressure to have anything about Buddhism pushed on you, which was important to me when I came along. I was a bit interested in Buddhism, but I appreciated that I could come to it in my own time and explore it. It was quite clear that if I wanted to come along just for meditation that was fine. It was quite friendly but not in a pushy way (F12).

She gradually became interested in Buddhism, and then she attended the Introduction to Buddhism course at the London Buddhist Centre to find out about Buddhism. During the course, she was told that a retreat was a good idea in order to get more of a sense of meditation. First she went on a retreat for five days. Sabina says:

> I had a very strong response to this. I found it very uplifting to be around people who were living out their ideals, yet in a very practical way. It wasn't like going to church on a Sunday or talking politics and having lots of ideas which you do nothing with. It was very practical, people were actually getting on and doing things. I wanted to be around that situation more. Also I wanted to find out more about Buddhism(F12).

However, at that time she did not read books about the teachings very much. What attracted her was the members of the FWBO. She was most affected by the way that they were:

> There was a lot of positivity, but in a very genuine way. I think I had had a lot of theories when I was at college - social and political - and I was quite fed up with that. I didn't want more theories. I was more interested in practicalities and what people were actually doing and what they were like. There were people I admired and wished I could be more like. People who were generous and kind made me feel there was an opportunity to change and to be more like that (F12).

She became a mitra within two years. However, it was not straight forward.

Sabina recounts:

> I did feel quite divided about it. On one level I felt very strongly that that was what I wanted to do, but I also was quite afraid as well. I was afraid of being sucked into a big group and losing myself and who I was. So on the one level I decided quite quickly, but another part of me was slower. I think it was about two years after I came along that I became a mitra. It took about a year to feel safe with that decision (F12).

In contrast, John, a 45-year-old mitra, had a quick and radical conversion. He was brought up in a very poor and non-religious working class family where alcohol and drug abuse were common. As a young man of about fifteen or sixteen years old, John himself started experimenting and taking soft drugs. That led to harder drugs, until eventually he was taking heroin, and became addicted. That addiction lasted nine years. He tried several ways to free himself of the addiction with the help of a doctor. That worked only on a very temporary basis, for a few weeks, and then the whole thing would come back again. By that time he was also committing crime to finance his drug addiction. John recounts:

> It was so desperate and unsatisfactory. I was lying in bed one evening in 1986, and a decision was made to seek out a Buddhist organisation to help me. I saw an advertisement of an open day at the Croydon Buddhist Centre. I went there and that marked the beginning of quite a turning point for me. That was my first encounter. It was very good. What happened was after nine years of being addicted, I went to the centre, and that very first night I decided that it was going to stop, and it stopped. It had a very strong effect on me. Although in the past my efforts with doctors had failed, just that one visit to the Buddhist centre caused something to arise that actually broke through that. I saw people who struck me as being good people, happy people, friendly loving people, and I just made a decision that night that that was it (F21).

Rachel (F8), a 44-year-old Order member, has been practising in the FWBO for eleven years. When she found an advertisement in the magazine 'City Limits' for a six week Buddhist meditation course at the Covent Garden Centre run by the FWBO and enrolled for the course, she had been working as a community worker in a community health project. She had 'a lot to do, a lot of responsibility' in the project. It was very stressful and she felt that meditation would help her in her

work. 'I was very surprised, pleasantly surprised by what I found. The Order member who taught me how to meditate was very warm and open, and I responded to him as a person. To my mind he was a very good meditation teacher' (F8).

> At the end of the meditation course, along with the others on the course, I was told that if we wanted to take our meditation further there was a retreat which was happening over Christmas. I thought, why not? I had really benefited from the six weeks. I very much took to the meditation, it had a very strong effect on me and I was fascinated by the bits of Buddhism I began to learn (F8).

She decided to go on the retreat and had 'a very positive experience' on that retreat. After that she started to come to the London Buddhist Centre. Rachel says, 'I gradually started to learn more about Buddhism and continued to meditate and got more and more immersed in it' (F8).

Some converts approached the FWBO for the benefits of meditation in order to relieve their distress, and others were seeking something meaningful in their lives. Laura, a 46-year-old mitra, is an example of those seekers. Her parents were school teachers and they were nominally Christian. Although she was sent to Sunday school, 'religion wasn't part of my upbringing at all' (F10).

> I was aware that in my lifetime I wasn't really going where I wanted to go. I wasn't very happy and I was looking for some sort of change in my life. I had the idea that I needed to take more responsibility because I felt I was drifting into things and out of things and being influenced in a rather random sort of way by pretty well anything that moved. I was looking for something but I wasn't clear at that stage what it might be. The meditation class seemed a good thing to try (F10).

She visited the FWBO in 1988. Laura talks about her first impression of the FWBO: 'I thought it was very peaceful and calm and very friendly. Quite slow and non-threatening' (F10). Glen, a 28-year-old mitra, is another example of those seekers. He describes his non-religious background: 'From quite an early age I knew I didn't believe in God - maybe from about eight or nine. I knew I wasn't a Christian. I didn't know what I was, but didn't believe in Christianity. As far as I know, none of my family believes in God' (F15). He encountered the FWBO in 1993. At that time, he was studying at Art College. Glen recalls:

> I was definitely looking for an end to confusion. I was quite confused in my mind about who I was and what I wanted to do. I had a lot of anxiety. I just wanted my mind to calm down, because I was getting in too much of a state. Also another significant thing is that I had had quite a lot of involvement in drugs before then, so I think that had messed my mind up quite a bit. It caused quite a lot of confusions and paranoia. I was searching for another means of transformation which would work for me, where drugs hadn't. So there was a superficial reason, but also a deeper searching for something (F15).

What attracted him at first was 'friendship with Order members and seeing that there was a real connection with the Dharma and the Buddhist teaching and a very strong resonance of the truth of that' (F15). Glen says, 'I just thought these people seemed to be doing it right. The Buddhist ideals were being lived out here to enough of an extent. That made me feel they were genuine and effective in what they were doing. I think the key thing is friendship. I started making friends here as well' (F15).

Chapter summary

The Jesus Army had 649 people living in community houses in the UK in 1998, and about 2,500 people are now involved in the Jesus Army in many different ways all over the UK. The FWBO itself claims that it has ordained about 800 members by 1998 all over the world and the core membership of the FWBO in the UK now is around 2,000. Regarding the proportion of gender, there are slightly more male members than female members living in the community houses of the Jesus Army, and the FWBO has ordained far more men than women. The two movements are not like most other NRMs which tend to have a higher percentage of female members than male members (see p.114-117). Of the respondents in the sample, the mean age of the Jesus Army is 31.7 years old and that of the FWBO is 39.7 years old, and thus members of the FWBO tend to be older people. Both the Jesus Army and the FWBO sample have much larger proportions of single people than the general public in the UK, and value celibacy (see p.123-125). Regarding the duration in the movement, the respondents of the FWBO (8.7 years) tend to have

much longer duration in the movement than those of the Jesus Army (5.7 years). Both the movements in London consist mainly of British citizens (see p.122), . .. the Jesus Army has more black people than the FWBO and most of members of the FWBO are white people.

While there is a much higher proportion of highly qualified people among the sample of the FWBO than the general public in the UK, it is not the case that compared with the population as a whole the members of the Jesus Army are badly educated (see p.125-127). Both movements have businesses; some of the members work for the business linked to the movements, and others work outside the movements. Almost half of the FWBO sample are engaged in work linked to the FWBO (see p.128), where they are able to share much time with other members and pursue the religious life. The Jesus Army recruits new members from homeless people on the streets, and this may be the reason why the ratio of unemployed in the Jesus Army sample is much higher than that of the FWBO (see p.128).

For over half the respondents of both movements, affiliation to their movement was not a conversion from other religions but their first . . . involvement in a religion or religious movement (see p.130). 52.5 per cent of the respondents of the Jesus Army encountered the movement through family, friends, casual acquaintances, or work colleagues (see p.131), thus personal contact is the most important for conversion into the Jesus Army. Many interviewees mentioned the friendliness and love they felt when they visited the Jesus Army. Some interviewees said that they were searching for something in life and the meaning of life, others said that they were religious seekers and that had been to various churches before. They claimed that they found what they had been looking for in the Jesus Army. One interviewee came to know the Jesus Army through their family, and another grew up in one of the community houses. However, they did not automatically become covenant members. Both of them claimed that they made the decision themselves to remain in the Jesus Army, although their families decided to leave the Jesus Army.

While 45.8 per cent of the respondents of the FWBO encountered the movement through family, friends, casual acquaintances, or work colleagues, 42.9 per cent encountered the movement through its literature or publicity (see p.131, 132). Many interviewees said that they approached the FWBO because of the interest in meditation or Buddhism. Having read the publicity for meditation or Buddhism, they visited the FWBO centres without any personal recommendation or any relationship with a member, since they were intellectually motivated, as Lofland and Skonovd (1981) describe it 'intellectual motif of conversion'. However, the reasons why these converts became more involved in the movement were primarily the quality of the relationship with members, the friendship shown to them by existing members. In other words, the attributes of existing members were crucial to their further involvement in the movement. Wilson and Dobbelaere discovered the same pattern in their study of Soka Gakkai International in the UK (1994).

Having provided an account of the social composition of these movements, I now turn to a discussion of the attitudes and values of members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO.

6. Attitudes and values of the members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO

The previous chapter made an analysis of the two movements using survey data and findings from interviews for the purpose of understanding their social composition. Their social composition reflects the backgrounds of those who joined the two movements. As examined in the previous chapter, most people joined these NRMs for reasons either of doctrine and practices, or the qualities displayed by the members. There is, in Weberian terms, an elective affinity[1] in such cases between the characteristics of NRMs and the values of the people who join them. There is also a two-way interaction[2] between the characteristics of NRMs and the attitudes and values of their members. The characteristics of NRMs affect the attitudes and values of their members while the backgrounds and characteristics of their members may modify the characteristics of NRMs. The characteristics of the Jesus Army and the FWBO were examined in chapters three and four. The social background of members, which, of course, is part of the characteristics of the members and influences their attitudes and values, was dealt with in chapter five. This chapter will investigate the attitudes and values of the members, which are also part of their characteristics[3].

Weber (1978: 24) described four ways in which social action, like all action, may be oriented. One of these is value-rational[4], which according to Weber (1978:

[1] The attraction of persons to a religious world view because it justifies one's self-interests and one's current outlook; the tendency for members of certain social and economic groups to be drawn to certain religious beliefs, which are an agreeable theology to those who already held the values and attributes of the theology (Roberts, 1995: 236, 253).

[2] Berger (1967: 19) noted on social interaction in a more general and fundamental way that 'Every social action implies that individual meaning is directed toward others and ongoing social interaction implies that the several meanings of the actors are integrated into an order of common meaning.'

[3] Carlton (1995: 1) states that 'a discussion of values must subsume the study of ethics (Greek, *ethikos*) which derives from the term *ethos* (disposition or character), which has come to mean the spirit of a people or community. Ethics as a discipline is roughly synonymous with that of moral philosophy which connotes the idea of moral values and moral behaviour.'

[4] The other three are instrumentally rational, affectual, and traditional ways (Weber, 1978: 24, 25).

24, 25) is determined by 'a conscious belief in the value for its own sake of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, independently of its prospects of success' and that the orientation of value-rational action is a 'clearly self-conscious formulation of the ultimate values governing the action and the consistently planned orientation of its detailed course to these values.' Weber added:

> Examples of pure value-rational orientation would be the actions of persons who, regardless of possible cost to themselves, act to put into practice their convictions of what seems to them to be required by duty, honor, the pursuit of beauty, a religious call, personal loyalty, or the importance of some 'cause' no matter in what it consists (1978: 25).

Thus, value[5] is one of the keys to understanding the actions of people, especially the actions of religious people because value-rational action, as Weber (1978: 25) pointed out, involves commands or demands which are typical of religion.

As was previously mentioned in chapter one, this research is concerned with an exploration of values related to altruism in the religious contexts rather than fine measurements on every aspect of the Jesus Army and the FWBO. Nevertheless, we need to examine a cluster of attitudes and values of the members before we begin the discussion on altruism for, as Oppehnheim (1992: 177) notes, an attitude does not exist in isolation 'within' the individual. Generally speaking, attitudes are interlinked with components of other attitudes and stem from deeper levels of the value system 'within' the person (See Figure 6.1).

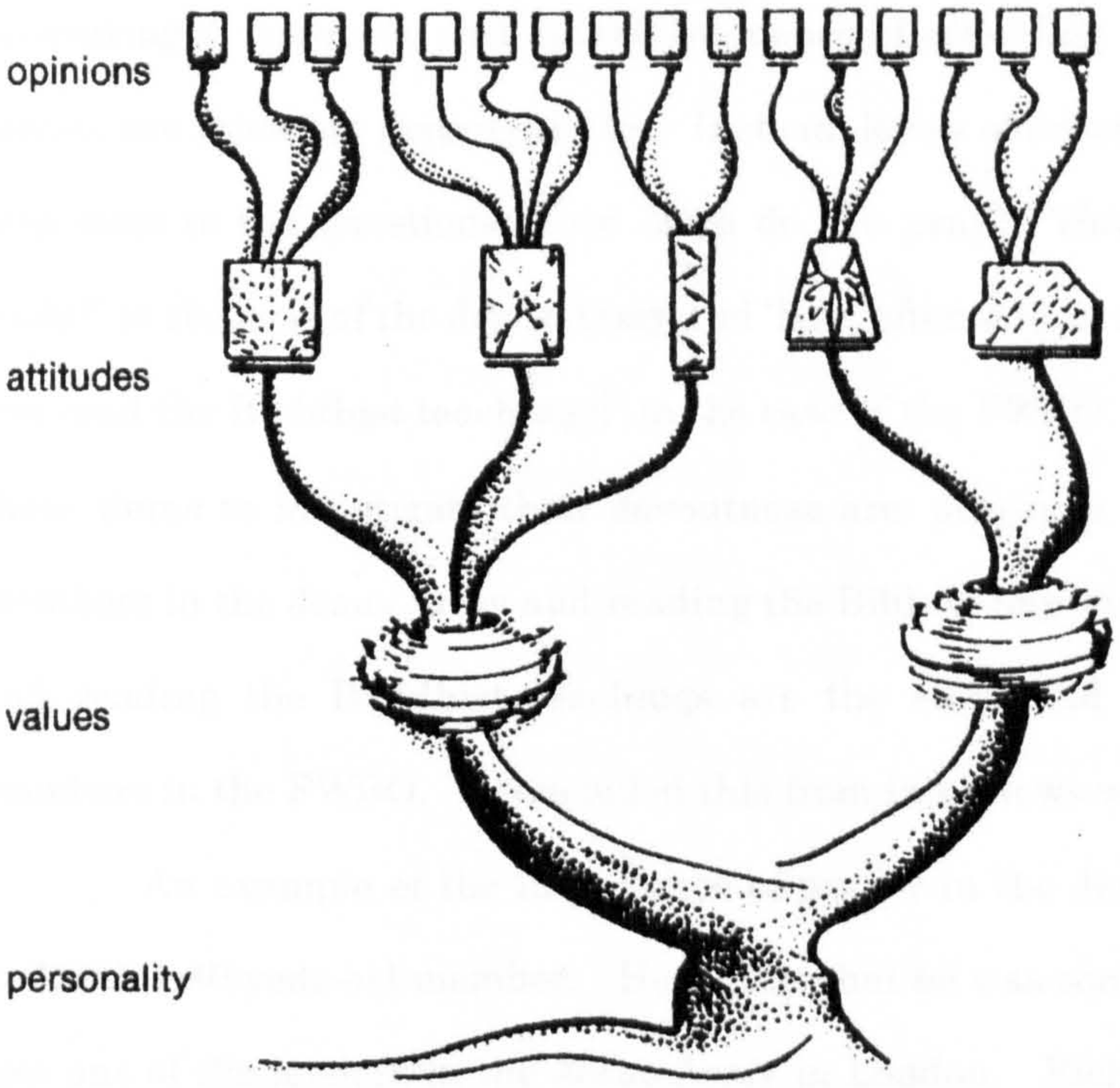
The European Values Study (Barker et al., 1992: 3) defines a value as 'an underlying disposition contributing to the general explanation of attitudes and behaviour', and Oppenheim (1992: 174) defines an attitude as 'a state of readiness, a tendency to respond in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli.' Although attitudes are expressed in speech or behaviour only when the object of the attitude is perceived, attitudes owe less to individual reflection than to the social

[5] Weber (1949) identified the problem of values at two levels: the relationship between values and scientific investigation, and the determination of values in scientific investigation. The first level is the realm of scientific objectivity and value judgement, which was discussed in chapter one. This chapter refers to the second level.

processes of upbringing, custom, and habituation. Custom and convention are always open to analysis but most people, most of the time, take morals as given from their social surroundings (cf., Abrams et al. (eds), 1981: 7).

Figure 6.1

The tree model



(Oppenheim, 1992: 177)

There is one further point that we must bear in mind. Attitudes are reinforced by belief and often attract strong feelings which may lead to particular behavioural intents, and are acquired or modified by absorbing, or reacting to, the attitudes of 'others' (Oppenheim, 1992: 175-178). Therefore, the content of this chapter will be highly relevant to the next chapter which will deal particularly with altruism because altruism exists on the condition of the presence of 'others'.

In this chapter, both the Jesus Army and the FWBO are dealt with in parallel for purposes of comparison.

Devotion and commitment

For the purpose of analysing the correlation between altruism and religion, the respondents were asked several questions on members' attitudes of devotion and commitment. As independent variables, I did not ask church attendance or the frequency of participation in the activities at the Buddhist centre, because some of the members of both the movements live in community houses and it is difficult to compare them with members who live 'outside'. Some of the obvious ways of measuring devoutness, such as the frequency of attending 'church' or the Buddhist centre, are rendered inappropriate. Instead, levels of devotion are measured by the responses to the questions: 'How often do you pray?'; 'How often do you read the Bible?' in the case of the Jesus Army and 'How often do you meditate?'; 'How often do you read the Buddhist teachings?' in the case of the FWBO. The reasons for taking these items to investigate their devoutness are: prayer is the core activity for the members in the Jesus Army and reading the Bible is important for them; meditation and reading the Buddhist teachings are the basic and staple activities of the members in the FWBO. I concluded this from interviews with members.

An example of the importance of prayer in the Jesus Army is supplied by Richard, a 40-year-old member. He claims that he was converted by prayer. He is now one of the leaders in the Jesus Army in London. Richard became a Christian at his first participation in a meeting of the church which the founder, Noel Stanton, attended. At the time Richard was a teenager. He says, 'someone prayed with me and asked me if I would like to ask the Lord into my life, and I did. I found an experience of faith' (J9). Howard, a 32-year-old member, is another example of conversion by prayer. He used to live on the streets. He was homeless and met a female member of the Jesus Army on the street five years ago. She prayed with him and brought him something to eat. Howard recalls:

> You see it all seemed to happen before I got here [a community house in London], when I met a member of the Jesus Army. She prayed for me, I threw away my cigarettes, I never smoked again, and I knew then that drinking was no good. I knew then that all the other things that I had been into were no good, and it was from that point onwards that I said I

> would do this no more. I had never really read the Bible yet, I had never heard anyone say to me that to be a Christian you have got to be like this and like that. I just felt in my heart that all things I was doing were wrong straight away, so it was God working in me before I came here (J11).

Prayer is indeed a very important activity to the members of the Jesus Army. Jean, a 45-year-old member, prays even for the leaders in the Jesus Army, whom she respects very much and calls her teachers. She says, 'I have found that by praying for them, I am blessed, because I have prayed for wisdom and knowledge to be given to them by God. The teachers have really given their life to the Lord' (J8).

Drusilla, a style 2 member, explains the reason why prayer is important. She believes that goodness comes from God and that badness comes from Satan. She states, 'that is why people should continue to pray' (J3). Drusilla prays to Jesus once or twice a day, but it depends. She says, 'for instance sometimes in the day I feel the need, a burden on my heart for somebody or for a situation, and the only way to deal with that burden is to take yourself away and just to pray, to meet with God' (J3).

Table 6.1

Practice in the Jesus Army

	Prayer	Bible
Never	0 (0.0)	1 (2.6)
Occasionally	2 (5.3)	5 (13.2)
Every few days	6 (15.8)	17 (44.7)
Once a day	9 (23.7)	8 (21.1)
More than once a day	21 (55.3)	7 (18.4)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

As Table 6.1 shows, prayer is not a special or extraordinary activity for the members in the Jesus Army: about eighty per cent of the sample pray at least once a day. Prayer is a part of their life. Paul, a 25-year-old member, says:

> I talk to God how you would talk to a friend, with reverence and respect, you don't have to go all solemn, you can talk to God while you are working, sometimes you can pray to God from your heart, and God hears that, or speaking in tongues, which is a language God gives to us, so that those who do not believe will believe because it is a gift from God, and praying in tongues is just like talking directly to God (J10).

Paul says that he talks to God anytime and anywhere as does a 43-year-old member, Liam. Liam says, 'Prayer is the walk with God. That is continuous. That is as important as those times of quiet, but you do need to pull yourself apart to see God and I do that regularly, sometimes I go out for a walk at lunchtime' (J13). Liam finds walking and being outside very helpful to finding God, rather than sitting in a chair. He reveals, 'I don't like sitting down. When I am praying I move around. I like to walk around and express myself, speak things out, look outward. To me you find God out there, not just inside you' (J13).

Mary, a style 4 member, talks very emotionally about praying to Jesus:

> I so much love Jesus. He is now part of me. I can not do anything without Him. Every time I wake up in the morning I look up and see the goodness of the Lord, I see all that he has done for me. I am always in His presence, early in the morning, praying and I love it. I stay in my bed, I pray to Him and I worship Him. I read my Bible very early in the morning. Wherever I go in the house, I never stop singing to and praising God. I love to be in the presence of God (J16).

Mary reads the Bible early in the morning every day. The Bible is also very important to the members of the Jesus Army. Liam has a Bible teaching type ministry. He has a meeting with the local congregation every Sunday morning and he brings something forward every week from the Bible. Liam says, 'I am often pondering on that through the week. I read regularly - every day I read something from the Bible, even if it is just a few verses. I think it is important that you are steeped in the word of God' (J13). Horatio, a style 3 member, also reads the Bible regularly. He says, 'I read the Bible every day before I go to bed and in the morning.

It is my inspiration. Sometimes it talks to me about things I live daily. It inspires me to carry or gives me wisdom to do things' (J21). Horatio believes that reading the Bible helps him to take the right steps in his daily life. However, not all members of the Jesus Army are diligent in their Bible studies. Moira, a 20-year-old member, confesses, 'I do not read the Bible as much as I should. Probably about once a week or twice a week' (J15). As Table 6.1 shows, however, Moira's case is not rare. 44.7 per cent of the sample read the Bible as frequently as Moira does i.e. every few days.

There is considerable evidence to show the importance of meditation and reading the Buddhist teachings in the case of the FWBO. Many people became members of the FWBO through meditation. Kathy, a 29-year-old member, is one of them. She read a leaflet of the FWBO about a meditation class at Covent Garden in 1992. She was interested to know what meditation was because she had never meditated and therefore she went to one of the classes. Kathy recalls, 'It was just so positive and the effects were immediate. It was spring and it felt like a waking up, really' (F7). At the time, she was not seeking any solution for any specific problem, but she joined the FWBO because of meditation. She explains, 'the woman that taught me to meditate particularly struck me. I partly thought that if that was what meditation did for her, then I would like to learn how to do it' (F7).

Michael, a 58-year-old member, thinks that meditation is extremely important. He says, 'It is dealing with myself, but also dealing with other people as well, both friends and people who aren't friends, but whom I have to deal with' (F18). He meditates daily mainly in his flat, but sometimes at the Buddhist centre. Joel, a 37-year-old member, also meditates daily at home. He is stricter about it than Michael is. Joel usually gets up at 6.30am, does some yoga for forty minutes and meditates for an hour and twenty minutes. Then he has breakfast with the members of the community house and goes into work at 9.40am. Joel and Michael are not atypical: over seventy per cent of the sample of the FWBO meditate once a day. Table 6.2 shows the frequency of meditation and the Buddhist teachings.

Table 6.2

Practice in the FWBO

	Meditation	Teachings
Never	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Occasionally	4 (5.7)	10 (14.3)
Every few days	11 (15.7)	49 (70.0)
Once a day	50 (71.4)	6 (8.6)
More than once a day	5 (7.1)	5 (7.1)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Moreover, Michael tells of the importance of the Buddhist teachings and insists that they have affected every aspect of his life. He says:

> [The Buddhist teachings] brings a sense of purpose and meaning to life, a greater calmness, and an ability to deal with myself. They bring about change within myself for the good. For example, socially I have made so many new friends. I have a whole context for my life which I didn't have before. I think I am stronger ethically as well, because there is a strong emphasis on ethics which I cannot ignore. I have to look at my ethical practice: the way I relate to other people. I feel I am a much better person for having encountered the teachings of the Dharma (F18).

Table 6.3

Self measured commitment to the movement

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
1 the weakest	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
2	4 (10.8)	1 (1.4)
3	2 (5.4)	1 (1.4)
4	12 (32.4)	26 (37.1)
5 the strongest	19 (51.4)	42 (60.0)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Subjective religiosity was tested by asking the members how they rated their commitment to the movement in order to test the comprehensiveness of devotion and commitment. Respondents could score on a scale from 1 to 5 with 5 being the strongest rating and 1 being the weakest. Whilst among the sample of the Jesus Army 51.4 per cent selected 5 and 32.4 per cent chose 4, in the case of the FWBO 60.0 per cent selected 5 and 37.1 per cent chose 4 (Table 6.3).

The mean score of respondents of the Jesus Army is 4.24, and that of the FWBO is 4.56. Both the movements seem to consist of considerably devout members. This can be explained quite naturally as due to the characteristics of both the movements which value friendship and communal living. The members can share many things with other members and pursue religious life there, and they can determine as many things as possible according to the teachings. In other words, the circumstances are controlled by the religious demands and can be the place where they should practise the teachings as part of their daily life. Being surrounded by others who are committed to the same beliefs and values makes it easier to live in accordance with them. For example, space and time will be allowed for the core activities which will, moreover, be regarded as the norm. As I have quoted, Moira confesses, 'I do not read the Bible as much as I should. Probably about once a week or twice a week' (J15). Devout members will act as models for the less devout, who may also fear being criticised if they become too lax. It becomes a self-reinforcing system. The relationship with other members enhances their commitment to the movement.

Political attitudes

Political attitudes can be related to all aspects of social life where there is some inequality of power between two or more people and there are social interactions to sustain or change the inequality (cf. Abercrombie et al., 1994: 513). This section will look at the relative importance to members of leisure and politics

and whether they consider religious bodies should speak out on a number of political issues such as disarmament, the third world problems, or racial discrimination.

Leisure is in the private realm, or at least concerned primarily with individual desire, while politics is in the much wider realm, or at least concerned with public benefit as well as individual one. Since the Second World War, there has been a great deal of discussion on leisure[6]. People spend less time working and, consequently, have more time to themselves and more time for leisure[7]. The findings from the questions on the importance of leisure and politics provided very interesting contrast.

The respondents were given a 4-point-importance scale. The scores in Table 6.4 are the mean scores with those of the UK sample of the European Values Study (1990).

Table 6.4

The mean scores of a 4-point-importance scale on leisure and politics

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO	UK
Leisure	2.43	1.88	1.73
Politics	3.14	2.74	2.72

1: very important, 2: quite important, 3: not very important, 4: not at all important[8].

The respondents of the FWBO have almost the same mean scores as the UK sample, whilst the sample of the Jesus Army has much higher mean scores than the others.

[6] See R, Rapoport, 1975 Leisure and the Family Life Cycle; S. Parker, 1983 Leisure and Work; C. Rojek, 1985 Capitalism and Leisure Theory.

[7] Leisure is seen as the opposite of work. After a pilot questionnaire survey, however, I came to the conclusion that it was impracticable to ask members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO about the importance of work because some of them have jobs linked to the movement and the meanings of work for them are different from that of others who work outside. Consequently, the importance of work was not asked in this research.

[8] This UK sample data of the European Values Study (1990) is provided with the scores of Sok . Gakkai international (SGI) by Wilson & Dobbelaere (1994). The mean scores of SGI sample in Britain are: Leisure 1.69; Politics 2.36 (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 126).

The members of the Jesus Army seem to be less interested in both leisure and politics. The finding is reflected in the words of Liam who lives in a community house of the Jesus Army: 'I think our life is so committed to the church and the vision of the church. It is a wholehearted thing. I haven't got a lot of time for other things' (J13). However, this does not mean that the social consciousness of the members of the Jesus Army is very low, as Table 6.5 shows.

Table 6.5

Should religious bodies speak out? Affirmative answers (%)[9]

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO	UK
Disarmament	84	91	56
Third World Problems	88	90	76
Racial Discrimination	94	91	66
Ecology and Environment	85	91	61
Government Policy	67	76	35

Table 6.5 indicates the percentage of members who consider religious bodies should speak out on five issues, namely, disarmament, third world problems, racial discrimination, ecology and environment, and government policy. Although both the Jesus Army and the FWBO samples were less in favour of comment on government policy than they were on the other issues, both score higher than the UK sample on all five issues. The figures suggest that the members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO strongly believe that their movement should speak out on social issues. This is not surprising. The members of the Jesus Army believe that everything is a gift from God and they need an endorsement of their social life in

[9] This UK sample data of the European Values Study (1990) is provided with the scores of Sokka Gakkai international (SGI) by Wilson & Dobbelaere (1994). The percentages of SGI sample in Britain are: Disarmament 83%; Third World Problems 81%; Racial Discrimination 81%; Ecology and Environment 84%; Government Policy 44% (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 134).

terms of a religious context. They wish to see God's work everywhere. In the case of the FWBO they have a vision of the mandala[10] expanding, so that more and more aspects of society are positively influenced by Buddhism. They are not interested in making their religious holy place secluded from society. They try to form and maintain their meditation to make them feel an increasing concern for the environment and for their fellow human beings (Vessanara, 1996: 30-31). Berger explained this role of religion by stating:

> religion has played a strategic part in the human enterprise of world-building. Religion implies the farthest reach of man's self-externalization, of his infusion of reality with his own meanings. Religion implies that human order is projected into the totality of being. Put differently, religion is the audacious attempt to conceive of the entire universe as being humanly significant (1967: 27, 28).

Sexual and moral attitudes

The research of the European Values Study (1990) included the question: 'do you think it is proper for churches to speak out' on four issues: abortion, suicide, homosexuality and extramarital affairs[11]. Instead of the question, however, a 10-point justification scale (as used in the European Value Systems Group in 1985) was adopted on the above issues by my research in order to obtain members' 'personal' attitudes. Respondents were asked to rate abortion, suicide, homosexuality, and extramarital affairs on a 10-point scale where 1 means that the behaviour is 'never justified' and 10 means that it is 'always justified'. Points in between indicated intermediate levels of justification (Table 6.6). On almost all the issues, the mean scores of the respondents of the Jesus Army are very low and lower than those of the FWBO.

[10] A symbolic circular figure representing the universe in Buddhism.

[11] Through the question it is possible to investigate the role of religion to prescribe moral precepts, or whether people expect religion to be an agency of instruction in sexual and moral attitudes (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 128-134).

Table 6.6

The mean scores of a 10-point justification scale on sexual and moral matters

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO	UK
Abortion	2.89	2.89	4.14
Suicide	2.41	3.43	2.88
Homosexuality	3.26	9.23	3.69
Extramarital affairs	2.44	4.03	2.70

Note: UK data: Abrams, M. et al. (eds), 1985: 95

The findings of the European Value Systems Group (1985) show that those respondents with high scores (that is, with a more liberal moral outlook) are less likely to describe themselves as religious or to engage in religious practice (Abrams, M. et al. (eds), 1985: 105).

> The greater moral strictness among religious people may partly be accounted for in terms of their greater age, but this is not a totally sufficient explanation. Even when the effects of age are controlled for, a significant relationship still persists between religious adherence and strictness of moral outlook (Abrams, M. et al. (eds), 1985: 105).

The explanation used in the European Value Systems Group (1985) that 'one role of religion is to carry a certain set of absolute moral values' (ibid.: 105) seems to apply to the Jesus Army. The Jesus Army is conservative about sexuality and moral issues. In the community houses, unmarried male members and female members are encouraged to spend time with their own gender. They eat on separate tables. Sexual intercourse is for procreation and married couples are expected to sleep in separate beds. The teachings prescribe strict moral codes.

The FWBO needs different explanation. The mean scores of the respondents of the FWBO on abortion is lower than on suicide. The members of the

FWBO consider abortion to be more serious than suicide[12], the mean score on suicide may imply that the members should take full responsibility for their own lives according to the teaching of karma, cause and effect.

The mean scores of the members of the FWBO on homosexuality and extramarital affairs are higher than those of both the Jesus Army and the UK sample. The mean score of homosexuality is especially high at 9.23. Whilst 54 per cent of the UK sample rated between points 1 and 3 on homosexuality, 90.7 per cent of the FWBO sample rated it between points 8 and 10. Homosexuality is overwhelmingly acceptable by the respondents of the FWBO. Sex and homosexuality have been one of the issues in the FWBO[13]. The London Buddhist Centre runs meditation classes designed for gay men and lesbian women. In 1994, there was the largest gay men's retreat organised by the London Buddhist Centre, and held at 'Padmaloka' retreat centre in Norfolk:

> sixty-five men spent seven days exploring the theme 'Gay Men, Individuality, and the Group' in a programme of meditation, talks, and discussion groups with a team of gay men Order members. Maitreyabandhu's aim was to make it clear that 'Buddhism is for everyone, and everyone includes gay men – you don't have to be someone else' . . . (Golden Drum No.35 on November 1994: 21).

[12] This is in contrast with the UK sample. The 1967 Abortion Act made it possible for women to get abortions if they were in the early stages of pregnancy and could persuade two doctors that they met certain criteria. Some NHS doctors have considered that an unwanted pregnancy can be catastrophic to the life of a woman, so that abortion is granted to any woman who regards this to be the case (see Abercrombie et al., 1994: 227-229). Hence, the high score of the UK sample on abortion is understandable. On the other hand, society in the UK seems to consider committing suicide not to be justified.

[13] The FWBO has been criticised recently by the mass media and Anti-Cult Movements. An article entitled 'The dark side of enlightenment' in the Guardian, 27th of October, 1997 said 'the British-based cult is engulfed in allegations that it manipulated vulnerable young men into becoming homosexual.' The FWBO responded quickly to this. An article was printed in the Guardian, 8th of November, 1997 entitled 'Buddhism distorted' was by Vishvapani (a staff of the FWBO Communications Office). In May 1998, a document called 'The FWBO Files' was published anonymously on an Internet web site and distributed by post to various Buddhist groups, government departments, businesses, and journalists. The FWBO Files is a 20,000-word document containing many accusations against the FWBO, Sangharakshita and homosexuality in the FWBO. In response to the FWBO Files, the FWBO Communications Office published 'The FWBO Files: a Response' in August 1998. Dharma Life No.8, summer 1998 featured 'sex and celibacy'; 'The FWBO: A Response', 1998 covers issues concerning sex and homosexuality.

It seems that there are a number of gay and lesbian people in the FWBO, as interviews make plain. Michael in his fifties says, 'I'm a gay man. The church condemns anything that isn't orthodox, and the two are incompatible. So, I decided that the church and Christianity must go. I rejected it' (F18). An Order member, Philip in his forty says, 'I am homosexual, so I think as a gay man I was a bit suspicious of religion in terms of its attitude towards gay men. . . . Now I would identify myself as a Buddhist, who is also gay' (F23). Another gay man, Terry in his thirties recalls the time when he encountered the FWBO: 'Part of my motive for coming here was that I wanted to spend time with other gay men really' (F14). In fact, the FWBO has a meditation class for gay people, which Terry attended. In the case of Jeff, a 55-year-old Order member, the motivation for moving into one of the community houses was not only Buddhism but also his personal preference as a homosexual. Jeff recalls:

> Once I got involved I decided I would live in [residential] communities. I was living at home with my family at the time. That was a big step, to leave my family situation and go and live in a community house. Later my wife also became ordained into the order [WBO]. So we are both Buddhists and we have an understanding. But it was a very difficult period for her particularly. We seem to have managed it very well. I wanted to get involved with Buddhism full-time. I was also not very keen anyway on family life. My family life as a child was not happy, because my father and mother used to fight, so my view of family life was never very positive. Plus the fact that I am not really heterosexual, I am more homosexual, so I was never that interested in family life from that point of view. It suited me on personal grounds to go to a [residential] community, because it meant I didn't have to stay in the family (F16).

The members of the FWBO are more liberal in their views on sexuality than the members of the Jesus Army. In the case of Jesus Army, the teachings play a role of prescribing moral precepts, and its members seem to have a strict moral code. On the other hand, the members of the FWBO may not expect the teachings to give instruction in sexual and moral attitudes, instead it seems that they accept the teaching of karma, cause and effect, which requires full responsibility for their acts.

Importance of family and friends

In an individualistic society, NRMs generally convert single people rather than whole families. Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994: 97) point out that 'the new religious movements active in Britain since the 1960s have all recruited principally by converting one person at a time, and quite frequently the relatives of these members have not followed them into the new fellowship.'[14] The same phenomenon is found in both of the movements discussed here. Of the members of the Jesus Army in the survey, 78.9 per cent did not have any family members in the movement and in the case of the FWBO it was 84.3 per cent (Table 6.7).

Table 6.7

Proportion of family members in the movement

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
None	30 (78.9)	59 (84.3)
Very few	7 (18.4)	10 (14.3)
About half	1 (2.6)	1 (1.4)
The majority	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
All	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

Thus both of the movements have a high proportion of individuals who have no family members involved. One explanation for this may be that the respondents in this survey live in an individualistic society. Moreover, the most likely explanation is that their families disapprove or oppose their conversion. Such a view is expressed by the following remarks: 'it has been a commonplace, particularly in movements like the Unification Church and the Krishna Consciousness movement,

[14] Of the members in Soka Gakkai in Britain, 54 per cent did not have any family members in the movement. (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 98)

for parents to have vigorously opposed the conversion of their offspring (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 97).' Not all families, however, disapprove of one of their members converting. Horatio, a Spanish national living in a community house of the Jesus Army for three years, has never experienced negative reactions from his family. Horatio says of his parents who live in Spain, 'my parents know I have become a Christian and changed my life. They are very happy because I was bringing a lot of problems to them before' (J21). His parents came to the community house and stayed there for a week. His sister used to live in England and visited him regularly. Horatio talks about these contacts: 'they know where I am. They don't understand some of the points of the community living, but they are happy that I have changed my life and I am living for something much better' (J21).

On the other hand, Liam, a 43-year-old member living in a community house of the Jesus Army, had some difficulties with his parents when he joined the movement. He recalls, 'when I first came to the church they couldn't understand what I was doing, because it was so radical' (J13). At that time, he was very argumentative with his parents and wanted them to understand what he was doing. Liam remembers that 'it was like trying to speak another language at the time; we couldn't communicate. I felt they couldn't understand me and they felt that I couldn't understand them' (J13). His parents continued to be perturbed and his mother died soon after he joined the movement. He regrets having been unable to talk to her about why the church was so important to him and what it meant. His father died a few years ago. In the last five or six years before his father died they began to communicate on 'a much deeper level' than they had ever done before.

> He is a Christian, although very different from myself. But we were able to have a relationship which we had never had before. It was lovely, because although he didn't agree with everything I was doing, he realised I had found everything I was looking for and because of that he was basically happy. So we were able to talk things through (J13).

It was 'quite a blessing' for Liam to be able to talk things through with his father.

As to his brothers and sisters, however, Liam takes a critical attitude:

My brothers and sisters can't really understand what I am doing. None of them are Christians. Although there is friendship and communication, I don't see a lot of them. We have very little in common. They have gone their own ways and have done very different things. None of them are really open to what I am doing. They are not believers. They are materialists in their own ways. I am one of the youngest of the family and they look down on me a bit. They have just put my religion to one side as a phase. I think they still do that a little bit. They think I will come out of it at some stage. They think I am still a bit of a teenager who has got involved in some strange cult. They think I will eventually see sense at some stage (J13).

Nevertheless, he hopes 'they will find the Lord at one stage' (J13).

An example of a family joining in the Jesus Army is a 25-year-old member, Paul. His parents were initially very happy for him to be in the Jesus Army. His parents and sister used to be members of the Jesus Army but they left the movement. They turned 'quite bitter' towards the Jesus Army. Paul says, 'they would listen to the media rather than anything else and they went quite against the church, and still are, in a way' (J10). Paul recalls the hard times, 'my sister always used to be harsh, asking why I was still in the Church, why I was doing this' (J10). Now she accepts him for the way he is, but his parents still do not accept him. He says:

> My parents said to me 'Don't come to see us.' I did not know how to handle that, and I used to ask them why they were against the Church, then they would put down brothers in the Jesus Army, and it would make me angry. I used to say 'that is my brother, and you do not speak against my brother like that.' It was very hard at first, but I had to learn to be calm and patient, and respect my parents, because they have their own opinion, and I should not get involved with that (J10).

Paul has no hesitation in saying 'I am twenty five, and I have my own life, and this is what I want to do' (J10).

The following is an example from the FWBO. Glen, a 28-year-old member, has been a practising member of the FWBO since 1993. He says, 'my mother might be a bit sceptical about things like changing my name when I become an Order member. She is a bit wary of that and a bit wary in general of religious organisations' (F15). He thinks of his father as different from his mother. 'My father doesn't mind that much. He can see it has had a good effect on me' (F15).

Both his parents see that he is happier and that he has a direction in life. Glen says, ' they are happy with that. I am quite close to my parents in some ways. More so than I was. I find it easier to see them as individuals. I feel quite grateful to them in many ways' (F15). Glen maintains good relations with his parents.

The case of John, a 45-year-old member, is a little more complicated. He experienced negative reaction from his family once. Before he met the FWBO, he had been involved in drugs, which was very painful for his family. John recalls:

> when it changed through contact with the FWBO they were very happy. For the first few months they were very encouraging. After about three months or so, I think some of them thought I didn't need to do it any more. They felt I could become a normal person. Then when they realised that I wasn't actually going to let it go, that I was going to take it further, some of them found that a little difficult to understand. It didn't last for long and once they realised I was serious they just let it go (F21).

Although none of his family members has followed him into the FWBO, John has a good relationship with them.

Table 6.8

Proportion of close friends in the movement

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
None	11 (28.9)	0 (0.0)
Very few	8 (21.1)	1 (1.4)
About half	3 (7.9)	20 (28.6)
The majority	11 (28.9)	42 (60.0)
All	5 (13.2)	7 (10.0)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

As Table 6.8 shows, the Jesus Army sample has diversity in the proportion of close friends in the movement.

What we must draw attention to here is not the Jesus Army sample but the FWBO sample. 28.6 per cent reported that about half of their close friends were in the movement, 60.0 per cent stated that the majority of their close friends were in the movement, and 10.0 per cent disclosed that all their close friends shared the same teaching.[15] As noted in chapter five, 28.6 per cent converted though their friends in the FWBO, 71.4 per cent did not have any friends in the FWBO when they encountered it, and 42.9 per cent met the movement through the movement's own literature or publicity. Hence, it is obvious that most of the respondents in the FWBO sample did not retain old friendships with outsiders and that they established close friendships among the members in the FWBO after they joined it, although there is no suggestion in the teachings of the FWBO that they should give up friends outside of the FWBO.

I asked respondents the importance of family and friends. The respondents were given a 4-point scale. Table 6.9 indicates the mean scores with the UK sample from the European Values Study (1990).

Table 6.9

The mean scores of a 4-point- importance scale on families and friends

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO	UK
Family	1.57	1.76	1.14
Friends	1.19	1.10	1.59

1: very important, 2: quite important, 3: not very important, 4: not at all important.

The scores show that friends are more important than their own families for the members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO whilst families are more important than

[15] Of the members in Soka Gakkai in Britain, 36 per cent said that only a minority of their friends were members, 32 per cent said that about half of their close friends were members, 19 per cent stated that the majority of their friends were in Soka Gakkai (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 101).

friends for the UK sample[16]. To give details, 81.1 per cent in the Jesus Army sample answered that 'friends are very important' and 91.4 per cent in the FWBO sample chose the same answer, whilst 59.5 per cent in the Jesus Army sample stated that 'family is very important' and 47.1 per cent in the FWBO sample chose the same answer. As we have already seen, most of them do not have any family members in the movements. For those who converted and established their friendships in the movements, friends are more important than their natural families.

Personality

Personality is one of several concepts used by social scientists to refer to the set of more or less stable characteristics, as assessed and judged by others, that distinguish one individual from another. These characteristics are assumed to hold across time and place and to underlie behaviour. Like attitude, the notion of personality is primarily invoked in the attempt to predict or explain individual behaviour. However, whereas attitudes are directed towards specific persons or things, the term personality refers to broader and more general tendencies (cf., Marshall, 1996: 387).

I asked respondents their characteristics. The respondents were given a 5-point scale on ten characteristics where 1 means 'not at all' and 5 means 'very'. Points in between indicated intermediate levels. Table 6.10 indicates the mean scores of ten characteristics. It is impossible to compare the scores with those of the public in the UK because of the lack of the data. Moreover, we cannot attribute the results directly to the influence of the movements, because some of the members may have already had the same characteristics when they joined the movements,

[16] The mean scores of the members in Soka Gakkai in Britain are 1.18 (Family), 1.42 (Friends) (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 126).

others may have changed their characteristics through other factors such as meeting a tragic affair. It is possible, however, to know what sort of characteristics the members have from the results of the mean scores of ten characteristics: conservative, sociable, careful, talkative, reliable, secure, selfish, adventurous, good-natured, and calm.

Table 6.10

The mean scores of a 5-point scale of characteristics

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
(a) Conservative	2.60	2.26
(b) Sociable	4.00	3.50
(c) Careful	3.84	3.40
(d) Talkative	3.72	3.09
(e) Reliable	4.19	4.24
(f) Secure	3.84	3.38
(g) Selfish	2.86	2.77
(h) Adventurous	4.08	3.59
(i) Good-natured	4.00	3.91
(j) Calm	3.62	3.39

From the scores of (b) Sociable and (d) Talkative, one might say that the members of the Jesus Army are more extrovert than the members of the FWBO. The scores of (g) Selfish and (i) Good-natured reveal that the members of both the movements regard themselves as unselfish and agreeable. Moreover, it is clear from the scores of (e) that they regard themselves as reliable.

Requests and complaints

It is, of course, not necessarily the case that members of NRMs are satisfied with everything about their movement. Some members may want to change something about their movement and other members may bear with something disagreeable about it. Interviewees were asked whether they had any requests to their movement and complaints about it.

Helen, a 30-year-old style 1 member, does not think that she has any complaints about the Jesus Army. She says:

> The Jesus Army is based on the Bible and you can't question that. God is covering the whole thing and I want to do what God wants me to do. I don't have any complaints or requests really. I think it is a very pure environment. It is amazing that people can live under the same roof for it (J22).

Liam, a 43-year-old style 3 member, thinks that he is too busy in the Jesus Army and that he needs more sleep. He says:

> Life is very full. I have many pressures but no complaints. I think in some ways there is scope for improvement in many areas, but I have no basic complaint with the vision of this church and with where we want to go in terms of God. I love it. I love our community lifestyle. I love our Jesus Army. I love our radical and upfront image. I love what we do and how we do it, because to me it is so different and so special. But I think that if you look at some of the ways we work it out it can be improved and it could be done a lot better. But it is to do with details rather than your overall vision. I am very happy with the overall vision (J13).

Horatio, a style 3 member, states that he does not have any complaints about the Jesus Army and that he is happy with its communal life-style.

> I am becoming responsible myself. Before I didn't care about that. I was having my own life and doing whatever I wanted. Now I have to be responsible for others and to learn how to help others to live this way. I don't have any complaints about it. It is my life and I enjoy doing it (J21).

David, a 55-year-old style 3 member, talks about their communal life-style. He says, 'I would like to see our community houses fuller. I would like to see them expand, because I think they can offer a lot to people' (J14).

Verona, a 43-year-old style 3 member, thinks that people always have problems wherever they are. She says:

> Even if I had my own little house somewhere and I didn't belong to any church I would have problems. I don't think you are ever exempt from problems wherever you are, especially not as a Christian. In fact probably as a Christian you have more, because you are fighting against the odds sometimes. If you were a normal every day person getting on with life, you might not come up against things so much as you would if you were a Christian (J20).

Verona does not think that it is right to make a complaint about anything. She states:

> I don't think we can moan or complain or accuse the church or anyone else about anything that happens, because we are human beings and events happen and you have problems. Problems with children growing up and all sorts of things (J20).

She talks to her husband or leaders in the Jesus Army, if there is something with which she is not happy. She says:

> They would listen and we could pray about it and seek to do something to rectify anything that might not be quite right. The beauty of it is that we are here and we are learning to be always open. Not to hide things, not to have secret moans and groans - so as they become such mountains that they explode. Obviously it is not something that easily comes to you as a person, especially if you have been very shy like I was. To be open about how you feel is sometimes difficult. But in Jesus we can learn this as we go along. If we learn this way, always being open about how we feel, then we don't need to come to a point when there is something that is not resolvable (J20).

Sally, a 34-year-old style 1 member, finds it difficult to complain about the Jesus Army. She says:

> I find this church so amazing. I think the things we have in this church, music, expression, dance, drama, worship, and leadership are all so wonderful. I find it such a privilege to know a church like this. In every church, you will have some kind of complaint. I have always got somebody who I would share my heart with - a couple of people in fact - who are always available here. I know there is a deep down joy and satisfaction that I get from this church and the people here. I find it difficult to complain about it (J23).

Joanna, a 25-year-old style 3 member, says:

I don't think I would like to change anything about the structure. But, it seems too much sometimes. I don't know whether I would really want to change that. I think I would like to be able to go away sometimes for a retreat or do something to learn. Very basic things like learning different gifts, healing and things like that. I would like to be able to go away sometimes with a group of people. Because sometimes I think when you get away from your normal environment you are open to things in a new way. That is perhaps a little request, and it might happen at some point. I don't think there is anything particularly, which I can complain about (J24).

Few interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about requests or complaints.

Several interviewees of the FWBO mentioned that the movement was still young and that they were exploring. John, a 45-year-old mitra, says:

> We are quite a new movement. We are still evolving and we are still discovering ways of effectively teaching the Dharma, and living and working together. In a way it is still very much an experiment. It has been going on for 30 years and we have learnt quite a lot, but it is still none the less quite a young movement. I don't have any complaints. Sometimes I think, in a particular situation, it could have been done in a better way. But, I wouldn't say it is a complaint. It is just an observation about how well or not we do things. By and large I think we do quite well, and I think we also are prepared to acknowledge our mistakes. I think it is very important that we do that as well. Accept our mistakes and learn from them (F21).

Ellen, a 41-year-old Order member, does not regard the FWBO as a perfect movement. She says:

> I think we are all human beings and we are about thirty years old. We are very much pioneering how to practise in the West. We are in a process of learning and developing. Although things don't always seem to go very smoothly, we are constantly trying to communicate and understand things and change things for the better. So there are aspects of the movement which will change in the future. For example, the movement is just starting now to involve family more, so that there is a place for families and children in the movement (F24).

Rachel, a 44-year-old Order member, made a complaint about the movement's attitudes towards women. She says:

> I don't agree with all the movement's attitudes towards women. For example the book 'Women, Men and Angels' written by one of the senior members, which talks about Sangharakshita's views that women are at a spiritual disadvantage. There can be some views in the movement that come from people's conditioning around women (F8).

She mentions another complaint:

> In a way we are quite a young movement, and while we have been developing there has been quite an inward looking momentum. I think there can be too much emphasis on the institutions of the movement. I think at times some people can be a bit dogmatic, a little bit too inward looking (F8).

However, Rachel claims that she feels the FWBO is a positive movement. She says,

'I am an Order member and although I don't feel the movement is perfect I have chosen to join it because for me it is a very positive movement. There is always room for improvement. We are all trying to develop' (F8).

Joel, a 37-year-old Order member, says, 'I think the order is fantastic, but I think every individual within the order can always do better. We can all of us be a bit more mindful. We can all of us practise the precepts a bit more fully' (F19). He thinks that 'it is important to try and create communication that is open and friendly and truthful' (F19). Stuart, an Order member in his forties, also mentions the importance of communication. He says:

> In this movement it is OK to talk about things. It is OK to question people and even complain at times. But at the moment I don't think I have any complaints. Not any big ones that come to mind at the moment. It doesn't mean that I have never had them (F20).

Terry, a 34-year-old mitra, claims that the movement is ready to rectify mistakes.

He says:

> I think the culture within the FWBO is that if you do have things that you disagree with, you talk about them. I find that is usually very readily available. If you want to change something you bring it about. There is an environment where people are very receptive to change. Having said that I don't have a completely uncritical attitude towards it. I don't think it is wonderful and there is nothing wrong with it. That would be quite untrue. It is still quite a young movement and mistakes get made. I am usually very impressed that there is openness about them, as far as we know, and a willingness to confront it and work with it. If I do have difficulties I can raise them and talk about them (F14).

Chapter summary

I will address the issues raised in this chapter starting with the first topic, devotion and commitment. Prayer is a core element of the Jesus Army and is a part of its members' lives, while not all members of the Jesus Army are diligent in their Bible studies. In contrast, most members of the FWBO are diligent in studying Buddhism and practising meditation. Overall, however, both movements seem to consist of considerably devout members. This can be attributed to the characteristics of both the movements which value friendship and communal living and request a strong commitment. The members share many things with other members and pursue a religious life. Being surrounded by others who are committed to the same beliefs and values makes it easier to live in accordance with them. Devout members will act as models for the less devout, who may also fear being criticised if they become too lax. It becomes a self-reinforcing system. The relationship with other members enhances their commitment to the movement.

The results of the survey show that the members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO strongly believe that their movement should speak out on social issues. The members of the Jesus Army believe that everything is a gift from God and they need God's endorsement of their social life, while the members of the FWBO have the ideal that more aspects of society are positively influenced by Buddhism. The results of the survey also show that the members of the FWBO are more liberal in their views on sexuality than the members of the Jesus Army. In the case of the Jesus Army, the teachings play a role of prescribing moral precepts, and its members seem to have a strict moral code. In contrast, the members of the FWBO do not seem to expect the teachings to give instruction in the sexual and moral attitudes, even though they value ethical life. It seems that they accept the teaching of karma, cause and effect, which requires full responsibility for their acts.

Both of the movements have a high proportion of individuals who have no family members involved. Moreover, most of the respondents of the FWBO did not retain old friendships with outsiders and they established close friendships

among the members in the FWBO after they joined it. The results of the survey show that friends are more important than their own families for the members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO. For those who converted and established their friendships in the movements, friends are more important than their natural families. Regarding their personality, the results of the survey suggest that the members of the Jesus Army may be more extrovert than the members of the FWBO and the members of both the movements regard themselves as unselfish, agreeable and reliable.

It is, of course, not necessarily the case that members of NRMs are satisfied with everything about their movement. Some members may want to change something about their movement and other members may bear with something disagreeable about it. However, few interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about requests or complaints. Several interviewees of the FWBO mentioned that the movement was still young and that they were exploring.

Having addressed attitudes and values in general in these movements, I now turn to the central issue of this thesis, altruism.

7. Altruism in the Jesus Army and the FWBO

The definition of altruism by Montada and Bierhoff (1991) has been adopted in this study as a working definition of altruism. The definition is 'altruism is the behaviour that aims at a termination or reduction of an emergency, a neediness, or disadvantage of others and that primarily does not aim at the fulfilment of own interests', adding that 'the behaviour has to be carried out voluntarily' (Montada & Bierhoff, 1991: 18). The situations in which altruistic behaviour is observed can be divided into two categories: disaster situations and ordinary situations. Practically speaking, it is difficult to investigate altruistic behaviour under disaster situations because such situations rarely occur. Theoretically speaking, altruistic behaviour under ordinary situations may be more meaningful for this study than that under disaster situations. This is expressed best by Nelson and Dynes (1976: 49) when they say 'That social norms support emergency helping behavior more strongly than ordinary helping behavior implies that the reinforcement potential of religious reality construction may be most efficacious under ordinary circumstances.' In this study, however, interviewees were encouraged to talk freely about their altruistic activities without making a distinction between disaster situations and ordinary situations, in order to find out what kinds of activities and acts are altruistic for the members of both the movements.

This chapter will look at altruistic activities and acts which the members of both the movements were carrying out at the time of my research or had conducted before, and examine the meanings and constructions of their altruism. This chapter will also look at conflicts with society which the members of both movements may cause in the name of altruism.

Charity and altruistic activities

Theoretically, charity is one form of altruistic activity. According to the Encyclopedia of Religion (Mircea Eliade ed., 1987), the word 'charity' derives from the Latin 'caritas' and can be traced to the Greek 'charis'. As a theoretical concept, charity means love, mercy, kindness, and righteousness. In its practical application, charity denotes the distribution of goods to the poor and the establishment and endowment of social welfare institutions such as hospitals, homes for the aged, orphanages, and reformatory institutions.

In England and Wales, there were over five hundred thousand voluntary organisations, of which 188,476 were registered charities at the end of 1998[1]. To be registered as a charity, an organisation must engage in at least one of four aims: the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion, and other purposes beneficial to the community (see HMSO, 1989, *Charities*; HMSO 1993, *Charities Act 1993*;). Although it received only indirect mention in the preamble of the Statute of Elizabeth I (the Charitable Uses Act 1601), the advancement of religion has always been a charitable object (see National Council for Voluntary Organisations, *The Charities Acts 1992 and 1993*).

There is some research by Harris (1998) on charitable activities of religion in the UK. Her research examined the role of congregations in welfare provision in the UK, and the case studies showed that congregations were contributing to social welfare in numerous ways such as welfare projects, informal care, mutual aid and social integration. Regarding the welfare projects (ibid.: 153, 154), a congregation did a weekly soup-run for homeless people, another congregation provided hostels for homeless people, and another congregation ran weekly lunches on its own premises for them. Most of the projects were run on a voluntary basis by lay people,

[1] Of these, 27,232 were subsidiaries or branches of other charities. This means that there were 161,243 'main' charities on the register of charity commission (Charity Commission for England and Wales).

and mostly the recipients of the welfare projects were not members of the congregations.

By analysing the data from the American Congregational Giving Study involving 625 congregations in America, Hoge et al. (1998) found that frequency of church attendance was strongly associated with the level of volunteering to support church programs. Church members may think of volunteering as a part of their involvement and contribution to the church to which they belong. Social integration among church members encourages volunteering at church. Another reason is that church staff, when phoning members in a search for voluntary help, are more likely to think of possible volunteers among the people who come to church frequently or the people whom church staff saw recently at the church. Thus, it is only natural that there should be a correlation between frequency of church attendance and the level of volunteering to support church programs. In this study, therefore, charitable activities for groups outside of the movements were analysed in order to investigate a correlation of charitable activities with other factors which were not influenced by the above aspects.

As table 7.1 shows, of the Jesus Army sample 18.4 per cent undertook charitable activities for groups outside of the Jesus Army. The ratio of the Jesus Army sample is low, and perhaps lower than that of the UK public[2]. Regarding this, one of the members living in a community house of the Jesus Army explains, 'I think our life is so committed to the church and the vision of the church. It is a wholehearted thing. I haven't got a lot of time for other things' (J13). Indeed, as examined in chapter six (see p.159), for the members of the Jesus Army, leisure is much less important than for the UK public. Another member says, 'We are quite

[2] In 1992-1993 the General Household Survey included questions about organised voluntary activities undertaken in the previous one year (*Social Trends 1996 Edition*). This was defined as unpaid work done through a group or on behalf of an organisation, consequently this included non-charitable activities. 24 per cent of the UK sample did some organised voluntary activities, hence the percentage of people who undertook charitable activities is considered less than 24 per cent.

centred on meeting the spiritual needs of people, and of course on the practical needs of people, like food and such things wherever possible. London is a very big city, we could not go round meeting every need possible' (J2). In the case of the FWBO sample 38.6 per cent undertook charitable activities for groups outside of the FWBO[3]. The ratio among the FWBO is much higher than that of the Jesus Army sample.

Table 7.1

Charitable activities outside the movement

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Yes	7 (18.4)	27 (38.6)
No	31 (84.2)	43 (61.4)

Note: Percentages are given in brackets.

The issue of gender is related to the socio-biological explanation of altruism, and some researchers conclude that women tend to be more altruistic than men (Zook et al., 1982; Rushton et al., 1986). As Table 7.2 indicates, however, the mean score of a 5-point-frequency scale on charitable acts (Q16) did not show a difference between male and female members of both the movements.

Table 7.2

Charitable acts scale with gender

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Male	2.7	2.9
Female	2.8	3.0

[3] In the survey of SGI in the UK, one out of three respondents was active in some other voluntary organisation (Wilson & Dobbelaere, 1994: 152).

By analysing 49 interviews in four congregations in the UK, Harris concludes:

> The religiously-inspired motivation toward caring activity seemed to apply to men as well as women. In contrast with the situation which often prevails in secular welfare agencies, direct provision of care was not generally seen as a predominantly female responsibility in the congregations (1998: 161).

The case of both the movements in this study conform to the view of Harris. Harris also refers to the reasons for doing caring work within the congregations:

> Many interviewees were motivated to do caring work within their congregations by the opportunities it offered for self-fulfilment, self-development and trying new things. Knowing their efforts were appreciated was also important. . . . But religious values were a key factor too. . . . it was clear that interviewees regarded social care as an essential goal of a religious congregation (ibid.: 160, 161).

This view can be more strongly seen in the Jesus Army, although both the Jesus Army and the FWBO have welfare projects which provide welfare services on a regular basis. Let us examine the charity and altruistic activities in the Jesus Army first, and then the FWBO.

As previously mentioned, the members of the Jesus Army regard their life as so committed to the vision of movement and evangelism that they do not get involved in other charities outside of the Jesus Army. The Jesus Army makes particular efforts to evangelise people in need, including homeless young people, those involved in drug or alcohol abuse, and prisoners and ex-prisoners. In this work the Jesus Army aims to show 'Christian compassion and love, helping people to find themselves and stand on their own two feet[4].' John Campbell, a spokesman of the Jesus Army wrote about their activities for public benefit:

> Our main aim is to be a church of Jesus Christ and to worship Him. Consequences of this include the way that individual's lives are changed, often dramatically, through faith in Jesus Christ and finding a place in a living church with loving and supportive relationships. These include prisoners and ex-prisoners, homeless young people, those with drug or alcohol dependency, dysfunctional families etc. This clearly benefits

[4] A paper by the Jesus Army titled *About the Jesus Fellowship*

> society (a) in terms of individuals (b) in terms of the quality of life of society in general (c) in terms of quality of life of those who would otherwise be affected by the antisocial behaviour of such individuals (d) financially because (i) these people will often now become wage earners and contribute to the nation's wealth (ii) and also cease being a drain on the nation's social services.
> (John Campbell, e-mail on 25th of September, 1997)

EDP is one of those activities. Not all of the members of the Jesus Army join EDP; this is on a voluntary basis. Tony, a 49-year-old ex-homeless man, joins EDP on Wednesdays and Fridays. One Friday night, when he was doing EDP with other members in Leicester Square in London, a man came to their bus. Tony said, 'Would you like a cup of tea or coffee?' The man replied, 'No. I want something deeper, spiritual.' Tony told the man about Jesus. Tony recalls:

> It was just a conversation, but the guy changed from despair to hope. He knew he had a saviour. He was on his way to rob somebody to get money to buy more drugs when he saw our bus. We prayed for him. He went home and he told his mother that he found Jesus. He lives in this community [house] now. It is amazing, isn't it? (J30).

Tony has been living in one of the community houses since 1994 when he himself met the Jesus Army on the street. After doing EDP, he always feels joyful and exalted. He says, 'This is what God wants me to do. God has given me a ministry' (J30).

More than 500 religious professionals, lay workers and volunteers from various religious traditions deliver religious and pastoral care on a daily basis in every one of the more than 130 prisons in England and Wales (Beckford & Gilliat, 1998). Tony also visits prisons. He says, 'Christians can make mistakes. Some people find God and Jesus in prisons. We have a good relationship with a chaplain in a prison, we have a Gospel meeting there. We visit other prisons and just talk there' (J30). The research by Beckford and Gilliat (1998: 120) showed that proselytism was not a frequent occurrence, though some visiting ministers from Muslim and Buddhism accused Christian chaplains of trying to convert 'their' prisoners to Christianity. The Jesus Army claims that its members visit prisons regularly to help prisoners:

> Members of the Jesus Fellowship are in touch with many people in prison and are discovering increasing numbers of men and women seeking the living Jesus from the confines of their cells. Virtually daily we receive letters from prisoners who have heard of us or seen our literature. Not only murderers either! Even 'Rule 43s' (segregated prisoners) are finding Jesus to be a friend: men who have committed crimes which not only society but even their fellow prisoners deplore. They've been washed, forgiven, healed, welcomed! We've prayed with and for our brethren in prison: we've sent them our music tapes and videos. Sometimes we've been able to hold meetings where they are. Some of them have become ambassadors for Christ and for the Jesus Fellowship among their fellow inmates (Flame leaflet No. 4).

Thus, the movement itself regards helping prisoners as a part of its ministry.

Emily, a 22-year-old style 1 member, came to the Jesus Army with her mother when she was 13 years old. At first she just enjoyed singing songs and dancing, but gradually she joined evangelisation. She joins EDP on Friday's nights. She says:

> The emphasis of EDP is to go and touch people's life. It is basically a form of evangelism. What God can do for them, what Jesus has done for you. It is testimony. There are lots of people out there, they are searching for meaning of life, why they are alive, and God can touches people's life from different history, background, in a different way. I want to touch people's life, I want to tell people about God. I do that through conversation, I do that through music, I do that through drama as well. I know what God can do and I can tell them all what God can do for them (J28).

Emily visits prisons as well. She is one of the worship leaders in a prison. She says, 'I have a gift and I use it for ministry. I enjoy it. I want to bring something new to them by ministry in God's Love through conversation, music and speech' (J28). She continues, 'In a bad situation, they find something new, God's love in a prison. We say, "OK, it is not the end, just because you made big mistakes"' (J28). There are tears brimming in her eyes, but she continues to speak vigorously, 'God can change things, God can touch you. It is not the end, Jesus can forgive you, you can start again. That is what we show there' (J28).

Drusilla, a nurse and style 2 member, visits the Holloway women's prison in London with other female members. She says, 'we make friends with the women there, and if they need clothes or a rug for their cell or whatever, we try to meet their

needs' (J3). She goes to the Swaleside prison in Kent as well. The prison holds about 650 prisoners, and the Jesus Army has been involved with it for many years and have been taking regular meetings for over two years (*Jesus Life*, No. 47, First Quarter 1999). Drusilla sees that kind of activity as 'part of ministry and befriending, like Jesus was a friend to many.' Initially one of the members asked her to come along but she recalls, 'I think the Lord had been preparing my heart to do that sort of work, and offer friendship. God gives me the heart for this work' (J3).

Drusilla talks about compassion:

> I feel their pain, their despair, and I know how they are feeling day to day, and what is happening in their lives. I hope that they can see Jesus in themselves, and that they would like to get to know Jesus themselves. But, just to be friends with them really, you know, because some people have nobody, no family, no friends in this country. Many have not had a visit for many years (J3).

After visiting the prison, she always feels happiness. She says, 'I feel happiness that God can use me, rather than anything else, also that God has chosen me to do this. I feel the joy and fulfilment that God has chosen me' (J3).

Sally, a 34-year-old nurse, claims that she shows love to prisoners in the same way to people outside prisons. She gives a little talk, prays to God for them, and talks about Jesus, if prisoners want. Sally visits prisons with five other members once a month. She says:

> They are needy people. They committed crimes, but they have a great sense of guilt in prisons. We visit them because they are sitting there probably feeling more guilty than anybody outside of the prison. They are in prisons and cannot go out. They have no freedom, so we try to bring freedom that comes from within themselves. Physically they cannot go out, but within hearts and their mind, we try to bring a sense of release, so they can free before they leave prisons (J23).

Helen, a 30-year-old style 1 member, used to collect money for charity. She used to sponsor people for charity. When she collected money for a charity, 'it was not with the charity in mind, but it was because I needed a job' (J22), she says. Since she became a member of the Jesus Army three years ago, she has collected money for charities and helped homeless people but in a different way. Helen says:

> I have done it because I wanted to, not because I needed to. I am more careful now. I would rather offer homeless people some friendship or a bit of food that I might have on me, because they could just go and spend their money on drugs or alcohol, or they might not be legitimately homeless, but they are just begging because you can earn a lot of money from begging. That is why now I am not as inclined to give them money, I am more inclined to sit and have a chat with them (J22).

She supposes that she has become more socially aware.

We have looked at several charitable and altruistic activities by the members of the Jesus Army. We shall now leave the cases of the Jesus Army and turn to the charitable and altruistic activities of the FWBO. Most of the examples of the Jesus Army were activities to do with the Jesus Army, even though those activities are on a voluntary basis. Hence, in the case of the FWBO, we shall also look at their altruistic activities which have something to do with the movement[5], in order to compare the two NRMs. Let us begin with the Karuna Trust (originally 'Aid For India'; 'Karuna' means 'compassion'), which is a fund-raising charity founded and supported by the FWBO. To date it has raised several million pounds for supporting work done in India through its sister organisation there, 'Bahujan Hitay', promoting social development programmes with the ex-untouchable communities[6]. These include educational, health, and job training projects. The Karuna Trust also separately supports Buddhist activities for ex-untouchables who have converted to Buddhism; these include retreat centres and Buddhist classes.

Jeff, a 55-year-old Order member, is running an art and cultural project for the Karuna Trust in India. The project has a number of separate teams of storytellers, songwriters and actors. They make up plays, stories and songs, and go into villages, towns and cities doing things to do with Buddhism. When he visited India to see what was happening there, Jeff happened to join some cultural work,

[5] In the next chapter, we shall look at other altruistic activities by the members of the FWBO, which do not relate to the activities of the FWBO itself.
[6] The Karuna Trust had about 5,500 supporters on the 1st January 1999.

just because he had a cultural background in the theatre, and has been doing that ever since. For the last five years, he has been spending six months a year in India. When he is in London, he is raising funds for the project. Jeff distinguishes charitable work based on religions from non-religious charitable work, and he is cautious about religious charitable work:

> Some charities can exist very well without any religious association, there are many in the world doing very good work without religious affiliations or associations. Given that the religious aspirations and views are really skilful and not cultic, it would depend on what the religious doctrines are before I would say it was necessarily a good thing to support their work. I think one has to be very careful, because there is a lot of dogmas flying around, which are more to do with people's particular views than actually what is objectively good for the planet and mankind (F16).

Jeff claims that he is confident in his project with the Karuna Trust.

Lee, a 33-year-old mitra, gave up his job as an accountant and started working for the Karuna Trust four years ago, because he was fed up with working in a commercial company and the Karuna Trust needed an accountant. He took a huge drop in salary, but the working environment is much better for him. Lee explains, 'everybody in the office has their views and thoughts taken into account. We try to do everything by a consensus. You get involved in everything, so you feel you are contributing to everything' (F17). Lee thinks charitable work by religious organisations can be better than non-religious charitable work:

> The purpose of the Karuna Trust is to organise social activities and also Buddhist activities, so it has got that remit to spread Buddhism as well as to carry out the social activities. Also people with ethics, morality, maturity and wisdom, may be able to use their talents to develop useful projects which help people. So I think that people who are working on their own self development bring more than people who are not. So a charity run by a religious organisation can be better than one that isn't. I think ours is one which is better than a lot of the others, because people are working on their spirituality and bringing that to their work (F17).

On the other hand, he is careful about religious charities. He says, 'if people run a charity and they are religious, they need to be careful not to force the people they are

helping to conform to their religion, unless one of their purposes of the charity is to spread their religion' (F17).

Melanie, a 68 year old Order member, has been in the FWBO for 30 years. She does not officially do any charitable activities. She says:

> I am very aware of the community [house] which I live in with my husband. I suppose you could say that we perform acts of charity in helping our elderly neighbours, in doing shopping for them, in many ways like that. I don't belong to an actual charity. I certainly would hope that I perform charitable acts just as an act of kindness (F9).

It is natural for Melanie to think that 'people need help, and if I can help them, then I want to do that' (F9).

> Charity is about giving and religion is about giving. In Buddhism, generosity is very important. So if you are to practice Buddhism, then you give in a charitable way. The meaning of charity is giving without seeking recompense or a return for it. I think there is a similarity in religions and charity in the giving, whether it is giving the teaching or giving in other ways. But I think it is important that we give what people need, not what we think they should have (F9).

For Melanie, daily acts of kindness are charitable acts, and she considers not only the act itself but also the contents of the kindness and giving in order not to be intrusive but to be effective.

Tracy, a 35-year-old Order member, used to attend Sunday school when she was a child. However, she was not attracted by that and became an atheist. Her parents were atheists, but were 'very caring persons'. She recognises their positive effects on her. As a teenager she was aware that she did not want to live a purely materialistic life. She wanted to help people and to put her energy into beneficial work. She studied psychology at university. When she joined and started the practice in the FWBO in 1984, she had already had a sense of caring towards others and an interest in social work.

Tracy meditates for half an hour at the London Buddhist Centre five days a week and goes to work in 'Evolution', which is a gift shop providing money for the FWBO. She started working there in 1996. Before that, she worked for a charity for housing homeless people which was started by the FWBO, but grew away from

the FWBO and become independent because many people and money came from outside the FWBO to support the charity. She worked there for seven years. She enjoyed it very much but she felt increasingly that she wanted to put her energy to benefit to the FWBO more directly. At the time 'Evolution' shop was not doing well and they asked her to help organise it.

Tracy previously worked directly for society, but now she is working in a gift shop of the FWBO. Previous social work was for the homeless people in need but now the customers are of a different class and financial status. She believes that she is experiencing a 'broader selection of society'. However, she does not think her vision of people has changed. Although she is not directly helping people in need, she does not think she is less caring. She is still conscious of serving people whom she meets. She says, 'I am quite interested in the ordinary acts of kindness rather than social work. I am still interested in social work too, but I just think a lot of ordinary people can give to one another in quite simple ways' (F28).

Colette, a 25-year-old mitra, works for a vegetarian restaurant of the FWBO called 'The Cherry Orchard'. She saw an advertisement for the meditation course of the FWBO in 1994, and found meditation very pragmatic, practical and 'very down to earth'. She was impressed by the humanity, friendliness, and the lack of artifice. She has never done any social work, but she considers small kindnesses in daily life more important. When she is working in the vegetarian restaurant and meets someone who looks grumpy, she thinks that this person might be very tired or have had a hard time, and she attends to the person kindly and generously. Colette says, 'That does not necessarily mean that you have to be acting physically with generosity. It is more attitude of mind' (F26).

We shall now see the meanings and constructions of altruism which are the bases of their charitable and altruistic activities.

Meaning and construction of altruism

In this section, we shall see the meanings and constructions of altruism, first in the Jesus Army and then in the FWBO. Let us begin with a story of a member of the Jesus Army.

Liam, who has been a member of the Jesus Army for over 20 years, used to be a teacher and did some fund raising connected with the school before he became a full-time member. Nowadays he does not do any charitable activities apart from the activities to do with the Jesus Army. However, this does not mean that he is not altruistic at all. Liam regards altruism as activities 'to help benefit humanity, to do something good for mankind.' He thinks of himself as altruistic in 'the Christian sense rather than humanistic altruism.' 'I think that genuine Christianity is altruistic, but not in a sentimental sense and not in a humanistic sense,' he says. He distinguishes Christian altruism from humanistic altruism: 'my motive for doing it isn't just to benefit mankind but to see God glorified in helping mankind. Humanistic altruism can take you down a path of doing good for the sake of doing good, often to please your own self (J13). Liam points out that humanistic altruism can be 'self-motivated'. On the other hand, Christian altruism to him is motivated by 'desire to see God glorified and honoured'. Has Liam changed since he joined the Jesus Army? He says:

> The Bible speaks about doing well to all men. I have a heart that is ready to give to any one and every one. People we have helped with drink and drugs problems over the years have been enormous. People who have nowhere else to go and need to stay with you for a time. I have become more and more open hearted towards those people. Before I had no contact with those people at all (J13).

Liam sees helping those people as an important part of their 'life and ministry.' His model is Jesus. He says, 'Jesus to me was a servant to mankind, and my vision is to be a servant to people' (J13). When he behaves altruistically, he is behaving like Jesus. If it is important for the members to try to do what Jesus did, the recognition that one's behaviour corresponds with the behaviour of Jesus should be reinforcing. In other words, the satisfaction of knowing that helping people is an

imitation of Jesus encourages the members to help others (cf., Chen, 1988: 47). Liam's altruistic acts are to serve people not only in practical ways but also 'in spiritual ways'. He says, 'To provide them with food, give them a place to sleep. We do that, although we have to be realistic. If people don't really want God then there comes a time when they must choose for themselves' (J13). But nevertheless 'we are open to helping to all sorts of people. I do this in a way that I would never have done 20 years ago,' he recalls (J13).

Jean, a 45-year-old style 2 member and a nurse, relates the parable of the Good Samaritan[7] in the Bible to explain altruism:

> The Good Samaritan story in the Bible shows what altruism is. For instance, if we were going to church and there was someone waiting for a bus, we would stop and bring them with us, even if it meant being late ourselves, even if it was not to our own church, as long as they were worshipping the Lord, and in fact we would stop for anyone in need. In other words we were in our way being Good Samaritans (J8).

Paloutzian (1979) gives analysis of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The Good Samaritan is the man, who stops and gives his time and resources, who not only meets the present need, but also offers to cover future needs, who takes the situation to be his personal responsibility, who helps without coercion, social pressure, or tangible reward. Jean thinks being the Good Samaritan is a part of her life as a Christian.

As Ritzema (1979: 106, 107) points out, in a few instances in the Bible (e.g. Matt 25: 41-46) the punishments which will follow lack of altruism are mentioned, but a style 2 member, Drusilla says:

[7] The Bible says, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend"'(Luke 10:30-35).

Well, it is good to fear God, but God loves you and doesn't want you to act out of fear of Him. You love God and you want to please Jesus, and that is why you do things and obey God. If you don't know the love of God and you have not come to know Jesus, then you might live in a fear, a wrong fear. But it is good to fear the Lord, to respect and have a reverence for God. I do have a fear of God, but the longer I am a Christian, the more I get to know the love of God, and know that God is a just God. God gives sunshine for everyone, those who do or do not love God. God gives the sunshine and the rain too (J3).

For the most part of the Bible, the emphasis is on the rewards received by those who do behave helpfully. They believe that reward will be given by God[8]. Jean says, 'The Bible teaches us that it is good to exalt people other than yourself, not to see yourself as the main person, in this way the Lord will exalt you' (J8). Meg, a 23-year-old style 1 member, also regards altruism as 'a drive to see the welfare of other's needs rather than seeking your own gratification and satisfaction all the time. It is to see someone else lifted up rather than yourself' (J7).

Sally, a 34-year-old style 1 member, considers altruism as 'something you do for somebody because you think they might do something for you'. She says, 'I think what altruism means is being helpful towards others and looking out for their needs. I think that if they do good to others then they will get good done back to them' (J23). Sally thinks of herself as a very giving person. She likes to help others, 'if altruistic means liking to help others, then I think I am very altruistic. There are times when I probably don't want to be altruistic. It depends if you are feeling a bit down or not. I wouldn't say I only want to help and give, but basically I do' (J23). Sally repeats that there is a reward. She says:

[8] 'Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly' (Matt 6:1-4). 'When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just' (Luke 14: 12-14).

> We are here really to help other people, and the more we go out to others the more you receive. In giving you receive in a way. I am better at giving than I am at receiving. But I am learning more to receive help from others. I find it much easier to give (J23).

Sally thinks that it is natural for her to like to help others because of her occupation as a nurse.

Verona, a 43-year-old style 3 member, considers altruism as compassion. She says:

> As a Christian, God does call us to be compassionate towards people and that is one of the things we would seek to become. We would seek to understand people, to be able to feel with them, whether happy or sad, and to be able to pray with them. That is to have, as we would say, a bigger heart (J20).

There are not many members in the Jesus Army who are familiar with the term 'altruism'. Indeed, the term 'altruism' has never been mentioned in their sermons during the period of this research. Instead, they use the term 'love'.

On the other hand, the FWBO states in its brochure (Vessantara 'The FWBO: An Introduction', 1996: 6) that 'Buddhism is a tradition of teaching and practice that helps people to unfold the inner riches of love, wisdom, and energy that lie within us all' and that one of the facets of Enlightenment is 'a source of infinite compassion, of boundless love for all beings.' Altruism is one of the important issues in the FWBO.

Caroline, a 36-year-old Order member, regards altruism as 'acts for the benefit of other human beings, probably over and above yourself'. She says, 'I see altruism as personally rewarding as well as rewarding for other people. It could be putting others' needs before your own' (F11). She is involved with a charity called TELCO, which is an East London community organisation involving different faith groups. The organisation is concerned with social change and changing conditions for people living in East London. Caroline considers the work as an altruistic activity, and thinks that teaching meditation is also an altruistic activity. She says:

> Altruism is a formalised way of expressing one's wish to help all other sentient beings. So it is a particular aspect of one's practice as a Buddhist. You have your personal practice of meditation, but even in

> that you begin to reflect on your relationship to other human beings and to change that relationship. It is a natural expression of feeling more connected to other human beings. It is not just trying to get happiness for myself; I also want other beings to be happy as well. To do charitable activities, to teach or to work with other groups of people are a way of possibly having a positive effect on others (F11).

Sabina, a 36-year-old mitra, says, 'altruism is a going beyond oneself in a way. Trying to improve a situation or do something for a good effect to benefit everybody. It might mean that one has to put ones own needs or desires aside' (F12). She gives an example of altruism: 'It is a bit like giving money to a charity, instead of buying something for yourself you give it' (F12).

Patrick, a 41-year-old mitra, considers 'altruism is about other rather than self.' He thinks there are two sides to his practice; one is altruistic and the other is selfish, but these two sides feed each other. Patrick says, 'By working on myself I can be altruistic, and by being altruistic I can feed myself. Sometimes the distinction is not so clear. By helping others you are definitely helping yourself and by helping yourself you are helping others' (F13). Patrick talks about reciprocity:

> I want to provide the situation for others. Ultimately we are not separate. I suffer, the other suffers. If I can help to relieve the other suffering, it helps me as well. Others want to be happy and I want to be happy. It is just the appreciation of those basic facts. When I am not in a very happy state, going out to somebody else can actually shift that for me, it can put me back into a reasonably positive state. Obviously around the movement I receive acts of generosity from others (F13).

For Patrick, altruism is not necessarily having to do anything. He explains:

> Sometimes altruism may just be being a friend to people. You don't have to do anything obviously overt. You can just stay close when they are in trouble. The actual act of altruism could be giving an object, giving money, and giving advice, which are not always so good. Just being there as a friendly person might be better. I think just smiling to another person is an altruistic act (F13).

Terry, a 34-year-old mitra, sees altruism 'in terms of oneself having a positive effect on other people'. He says, 'Operating from the view that you can positively affect other people and, in terms of the Dharma, you can improve the circumstances of their lives materially and spiritually. Altruism is an emotional

response to other people in terms of trying to orientate them into a more positive direction' (F14). Terry thinks that altruism involves compassion: 'Altruism is related to compassion, and one has a natural internal emotional response to other people's suffering. Your response actually moves towards other people with the intention of improving them, or helping them to improve themselves' (F14).

Glen, a 28-year-old mitra, regards altruism as 'an orientation towards others as opposed to towards oneself'. However, he does not think that altruism is totally orientated towards other people. He explains, 'we have to take ourselves into account. We have to feed ourselves and look after ourselves. I would see altruistic persons as being more focused on other people, on the welfare of other people rather than everything revolving around their own needs, wants and desires'(F15). Lee, a 33-year- old mitra, sees altruism in a more strict sense. He says:

> The opposite of altruism is selfishness. Altruism to me would be ensuring that I was aware of the wider society and that I wasn't engrossed in my own little circular world. I would need to be aware of the environment, other people, other nations and that, as far as possible I would take that into account in my activities. For instance not wasting water, just giving away some of my salary, or giving some of my time to do some charitable activity (F17).

Lee claims that altruism may be expressed in various ways.

We have examined the meanings and constructions of altruism in the Jesus Army and the FWBO. There were many different altruistic activities, and those activities were carried out in the social dimension. The circumstances, therefore, can cause conflicts with them. We shall now look at these matters.

Conflict in the social context

As previously pointed out, there is a possibility that altruism in NRMs creates conflicts with society in the circumstance of secularisation, because altruism based on religious belief can be regarded as intrusive by a society which does not expect religion to play a major role in cultural integration or moral order.

However, this research showed the assumption was wrong. No interviewees talked about conflicts with society. Their altruistic activities might not be so overt and intrusive that they could cause conflicts with society.

Robbins (1988: 168, 169) notes 'in performing communal, therapeutic and other "mediating" functions in an innovative and relatively unregulated manner, religious movements come into conflict with more conventional mediating institutions and groups'. Robbins cites three types of institutions: families, clinicians, and churches. In the case of the Jesus Army, as seen in chapter three, it provides an alternative family among members and therefore it could come into a sharp conflict with their original families. Although there were some such cases, interviewees did not report any conflicts with society in terms of their altruistic activities such as helping homeless people and visiting prisoners. Indeed, they co-operate with other churches in helping prisoners.

On the other hand, the conflicts between clinicians and NRMs arise mainly from the hegemonic desire in the therapeutic and experiential marketplace. As seen in chapter five, some members sought therapy in a way from meditation which the FWBO provides, but there were no conflicts with clinicians. However, a few members of the FWBO talked about some difficulties in terms of their altruistic activities.

As seen in this chapter, Tracy, a 35-year-old Order member, used to work for a charity of housing homeless people. It was started by the FWBO, but became independent. She recalls, 'There were always challenges in terms of political things and communications. I would not describe it as difficult, but as demanding and challenging, because a lot of people co-operated and there were a lot of different ideas of help. Moreover, the demand from homeless people was sometimes difficult tomeetit' (F28). There were many non-religious people working there but she worked with them in the same way as she did with the members of the FWBO. She adds, 'just as being friendly'.

Joel, a 37-year-old Order member, works for the Karuna Trust. He is responsible for door to door fund raising throughout the UK. He started full time two years ago, because it offered him a job. Before that, he worked for it as a volunteer for several months. He wanted to harness his particular skills which were trained through various charitable activities such as working for Oxfam, the Green Party and Amnesty International. He feels his work is very meaningful and very rewarding. However, Joel confesses, 'it is not easy though. The work is very demanding. I work long hours and have areas of weakness that I am not particularly good at. It places a lot of demands on me to develop skills that previously I didn't have' (F19).

Emma, a 36-year-old Order member, is working for a charity at community centre which is nothing to do with the FWBO. The centre has a lunch club. The lunch is cheap and anyone may come. Emma thinks that people come because they are poor or they are lonely. She says:

> Although my colleagues there are very sincere, there is not so much common ground. The work is hard, and people get very stressed. I can see their stress when they speak to the old people there. People get tired. You have to be very careful, because the full time job is 35 hours a week but you could work for 70 hours a week and not finish it yet. You have to be clear when you finish and stop, not push it too far (F29).

Emma thinks that she has become more aware of people. She says, 'I can see some of my colleagues are not rude but are a bit flip with the older people. But I try to keep it quite direct. I am more outgoing and more responsive' (F29).

Overall, the interviews did not report any serious conflicts with society in their altruistic activities in this research.

Chapter summary

Although few members of the Jesus Army conducted altruistic activities through organisations outside the Jesus Army, many members carried out altruistic activities through the movement itself. Indeed, for many members of the Jesus

Army, EDP and visiting prisons are their popular altruistic activities. Their life is committed to the vision of the movement. On the other hand, the Jesus Army sometimes faces criticism for recruiting homeless people rather than helping them (see p.82, 83). As an interviewee said , however, through those kinds of activities they want to see God glorified and honoured. For the members the expansion of the Jesus Army in number means the manifestation of the glory of God. They claimed that their altruistic activities aimed to help people not so much in practical ways as in spiritual ways. Their definition of altruism is to exalt people other than themselves, to see the welfare of other s rather than seeking their own, and to be helpful towards others. When they talked about altruism, some of them referred to reward. They believe that God will reward their altruistic acts.

On the other hand, in the case of the FWBO, the ratio of doing charitable activities for groups outside the movement was much higher than that of the Jesus Army. Some members of the FWBO, however, distinguished religious charitable work from non-religious charitable work. An interviewee said that religious charitable work was better than non-religious charitable work, and another interviewee was cautious about religious charitable work in that it could be more dogmatic than objectively good for society. Two members who are not involved in any charitable organisations outside their movement claimed that people could perform charitable acts just as ordinary acts of kindness. Moreover, a member pointed out that it is more important to give what others need rather than what one thinks they should have. Members of the FWBO try to live up to the Bodhisattva ideal; their definition of altruism is to benefit others rather than oneself and to have positive effect on other people. However, some members talked about reciprocity. For the members of the FWBO, altruism is not totally oriented towards other people. In other words, altruism is personally rewarding as well as rewarding for other people, and they think that people should take themselves into account.

Regarding the issue of gender, no difference was found in the mean score of charitable acts scale in both of the movements. The other thing is that against my

assumption, the interviews did not report any serious conflicts between their altruistic activities and society.

This chapter saw the altruistic activities and acts of members of both movements, and examined the meanings and contractions the members gave to their altruism. I will now address to the question of the motivation for their altruism.

8. Motivation for altruism in the Jesus Army and the FWBO

The previous chapter showed the charitable and altruistic activities of the members and examined the meanings and constructions of their altruism. This chapter takes a more direct approach, examining what motivates their altruism. However, if we presume from the beginning that there are reasons for altruism which are common to all of the members, such reasons are likely to be mere metaphysical, or to bear no relation to their actual motivations. Schmidtz (1996: 118) asserts that 'Let us face the fact that our reasons for altruism can be real without being reasons for everyone. We must look for the real reasons, and accept that human societies need to deal with the fact that not everyone has real reasons.' Indeed, the interviews with the members of both the Jesus Army and the FWBO showed various motivations for their altruism.

Although there seems to be no motivation which was common to all the members, several prominent frameworks are readily available for explaining the motivations for charitable activities, and these frameworks are nearly universal and therefore legitimatise to draw on in accounting for one's own behaviour (cf., Wuthnow, 1995: 61). By using this type of framework, 'The European Values Study 1981-1990: Summary Report' found that voluntary workers had more altruistic and obligatory motives than instrumental motives. With reference to the European Values Study, four factors were used in the questionnaire of this research on the Jesus Army and the FWBO as a means of investigating the motivations and reasons for charitable activities; namely (1) religious motives; (2) altruistic motives; (3) instrumental motives; (4) obligatory motives. Religious motives were described as 'religious beliefs' in the questionnaire. Altruistic motives included 'a sense of solidarity with the poor and disadvantaged', 'compassion for those in need', 'identifying with people who are suffering', 'to help give disadvantaged people hope and dignity', and 'to make a contribution to your local community'. Instrumental motives included 'having time on your hands and want something worthwhile to do',

'personal satisfaction', and 'to gain new skill and useful experience'. Obligatory motives included 'an opportunity to repay something, give something back', 'a sense of duty, moral obligation', and 'to bring about social or political change'. Respondents were asked to rate the above items on a 5-point scale where 1 means that the behaviour is 'unimportant' and 5 means that it is 'very important'. Points in between indicated intermediate levels of importance. Table 8.1 indicates the mean scores.

Table 8.1

Motivations for charitable activities

	The Jesus Army	The FWBO
Religious motives	3.71	3.68
Altruistic motives	4.22	3.53
Instrumental motives	3.33	2.62
Obligatory motives	3.14	3.24

Religious motives and altruistic motives are higher than instrumental motives and obligatory motives in both the movements. It is probable that members of both the movements have strong religious and altruistic motivations for their charitable activities. We shall now examine interviews with members in order to discuss the more involved motivations for altruism.

People learn frameworks or languages of talking about their motivation for altruistic activities and acts from interactions with their parents, other role models or books. People have remembered, repeated, and internalised the languages which they have heard others use. The languages which people use to explain their motivation for certain acts are heavily influenced by their cultural, historical, and institutional settings (cf., Wuthnow, 1995: 61). In this sense, languages are 'modes of moral discourse that include distinct vocabularies and characteristic patterns of moral reasoning' (Bellah et al., 1985: 334). Thus, it is probable that the words by

which the interviewees expressed their motivation for altruism will show some different inclinations between the Jesus Army and the FWBO according to their characteristics.

Moreover, Turner (1991: xii, xiii) points out that Durkheim's analysis of moral systems rejected Kant's philosophy that an individual sense of rational obligation was the foundation of moral life. Durkheim insisted that the social origins of the feeling of obligation was the foundation of moral life. People internalise social norms through education and socialisation. Durkheim's view places emphasis on emotion, feeling and compassion as the foundations of moral action. Indeed, judging from the interviewees of both the movements, both emotional and rational motivations were found. In addition, there were religious motivations. Some interviewees related a few different motivations for their altruistic activities and there were a number of different motivations for their altruism. None the less, three categories, namely, 'empathy', 'rational choice' and 'soteriology' seem to be useful in attempting to sketch out their motivations for altruism. We shall now examine the motivations under the three headings, starting with 'empathy'.

Empathy

Regarding the motivation to donate to charity, a Royal National Institute for the Blind study of charity (Hunter, 1992: 7) identified two different types of donor: the placatory and the empathetic. Placatory givers attempt to distance themselves from an awareness of world problems and often respond in reaction to a direct request to donate, whereas empathetic donators feel a moral obligation to give. No interviewees among both the movements in this research seemed to be the placatory, whereas some interviewees talked about their empathy.

Sympathy is a similar concept but carries connotations of being on someone's side. People can empathise with their enemies though people may not

sympathise much. If you take some action in sympathy with someone else or in sympathy with what they are doing, you do it in order to show that you support them (cf. Campbell, 1998: 17). Empathy means identifying and feeling sympathy for another person. There is an abundant literature on 'the empathy-altruism hypothesis' emphasising that sympathy or empathy for the needy is the motive for altruistic activities. One feels sorry for homeless people or people in need and wishes to reduce their distress. Wuthnow (1995) analyses the same motivation of young people for caring acts in the category of 'humanitarianism'. According to Wuthnow, humanitarianism means:

> supplying aid, such as food, clothing, and shelter to victims of war or natural disaster. The goal is to eliminate pain and suffering. More generally, humanitarianism combines a feeling of compassion or sympathy with a value that attaches importance to helping those toward whom one feels compassion (1995: 65, 66).

The term 'empathy' may be more conceptual than the term 'compassion'. The interviewees talked about empathy as their motivations for altruistic activities by using the term 'compassion'. Let us start to look at some examples of empathetic motivation.

Duncan, a 43-year-old style 2 member of the Jesus Army, says, 'I feel compassion for the downtrodden in society, the poor, those to whom injustice has been done' (J1). He believes that God has given him natural compassion for those people. He continues:

> I feel that there are areas where I need to grow in compassion. Something happens inside me around these issues, and I feel this is how God feels, to some extent. I used to be scarred inside from the old life, maybe from hurts I had experienced, like for instance, rejections, which I had carried for a number of years. I was healed by God (J1).

Duncan states, 'God can heal us overnight, so that we can see the healing ourselves. Therefore, we show the same compassion for others' (J1). Jean, Duncan's wife, is a 45-year-old style 2 member. She talks about God as a source of compassion: 'I have to go and ask the Lord for compassion all the time, and keep asking when I feel I am

not compassionate enough. I want to bring the love of God to people, and without his compassion I cannot relate to the people in the world' (J8).

Howard, a 32-year-old style 3 member, used to feel that it was he who was guilty of all things that happened to him, even such extreme exceptional cases as being raped and abused. He says:

> God has made me see that it wasn't me; that it was the way things were at times. God also has given me an outlook to help other people in that position, rather than go out and do what I used to do, sort of violence and that sort of stuff. I now go out with a heart that draws these people in, and shows compassion you know. I go on the streets, and I talk to people, and I weep with them when they weep. We show them a love that they have never known. I feel their hurt and pain. God has made me a lot more compassionate (J11).

Duncan, Jean and Howard talked about compassion. To them, their compassion comes from God. They say that they feel others' hurt and pain, and that they feel compassion for those people who are suffering. They reach out to those people and show them the same compassion as God shows them.

Some members of the FWBO mentioned their own distress. Their distress arises from the unpleasant emotions which they feel as a result of seeing the homeless people or people in need. Alternatively, their distress may arise from emotions of guilt or shame they anticipate if they do not help. In any case, they feel sorry for people in need and carry out acts to help them. Their actual altruistic acts also relieve themselves from their own empathetic distress. I call these kinds of motivation for altruistic acts 'the empathetic distress motivation'. Let us look at an example of the empathetic distress motivation.

Bill is a 35-year-old mitra living in one of community houses of the FWBO. He works for a food shop of the FWBO called 'Friends Food' and helps the London Buddhist Centre to organise courses and various events. Before he met the FWBO and started to regularly attend its activities in 1995, he already had a strong sense of social responsibility. He wanted to engage in social work, and the social dimension of Buddhism had a strong appeal for him. However, his life in the FWBO had no direct connection with solving social problems in the world. At

Christmas in 1998, he had the experience of working for a charity called 'Crisis', which worked with homeless people. Bill recalls the time, 'At the time, I wanted to do something immediate for social issues. I wanted to see a more direct impact on social issues. Perhaps I was a little bit naive. It was a just desire to do something for social problems' (F25). He has had the desire to help people since he was a teenager. He thinks 'it was a genuine compassionate response. It was not from my experience, but a just natural thing. It was sentimental one, and I was suffering from the emotion at the same time' (F25). Bill's desire to help people in need seems to have been partly based on 'the empathetic distress motivation'. Bill is still a mitra, and has been practising and preparing for ordination. A few other members of the FWBO also talked about the empathetic distress motivation for the altruistic acts they carried out before becoming involved in the FWBO. They have been practising in the FWBO and they claim that the empathetic distress has been alleviated. Bill is one of them. We shall look at this matter in chapter nine.

The empathetic distress motivation was not detected in the interviewees from the Jesus Army. As we have seen, the members of the Jesus Army talked about their compassion in a more positive way. Let us leave the motivation which relates to empathy, and turn to the discussion on rational choice.

Rational choice

We shall now examine whether it is rational for some members of the movements to have altruistic concerns and commitments. According to Schmidtz (1995) [1], rational choice consists of maximising one's utility subject to a budget constraint, and in recent times theorists have taken the term 'utility' to mean something related to or identical to preference satisfaction. In some cases there are

[1] In this thesis, I am referring to the discussion by Schmidtz (1995) on rational choice and altruism. Regarding the discussion on rational choice and religion, Iannaccone (1997) covers the framework for the scientific study of religion.

reasons to embrace and nurture one's concern for others, and the reasons have to do with what is conducive to one's utility. It is rational to be peaceful and productive in order to create a secure place for oneself in society, which requires one to have a regard for the interests of others. People have self-regarding reasons to internalise other-regarding concerns. On the other hand, one seeks not only to earn the respect and concern of others but also to earn one's own respect and concern. Moreover, it is a simple fact that a person of principles inspires more respect than a person driven by mere expedience (Schmidtz, 1995: 110).

> Our ultimate interest is in having something to live for, being able to devote ourselves to the satisfaction of preferences we judge worthy of satisfaction. Not having other-regarding preferences is costly, for it drastically limits what one has to live for. . . . Concern for ourselves gives us something to live for. Concern for others as well as ourselves gives us more (Schmidtz, 1995: 105, 106).

In the case of some members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO, altruistic acts may be considered to be based on rational choice.

In the field of social psychology, altruism is classified as 'reciprocal altruism' (exchange relations) or 'kin altruism' (communal relations) (cf., Campbell, 1998). Reciprocal altruism is the idea that altruism can be the product of natural selection if one behaves altruistically to others who have the same predisposition to behave altruistically also. One cares for someone else in the hope of receiving help in return, and in such case the altruistic acts are like insurance (cf., Wuthnow, 1995: 70). As there is often a delay between an altruistic act and the reciprocation of the act, it occurs in those species where members live in stable social groups, have long memories, and a good ability to recognise altruistic acts. This involves the calculation of rewards and costs for particular courses of action. This suggests that people in general try to maximise their rewards and minimise their costs. The focus is upon the individual making implicit calculations about what is most beneficial to him or her. Regarding reciprocal altruism, Wuthnow (1991a: 90) emphasises that 'acts of compassion are discrete gifts that have real and symbolic value in order to suggest that they also embody, like any good or service, an

investment of time and energy'. Citing the arguments about gifts and reciprocity by Alvin Gouldner (1977), Wuthnow notes:

> giving creates an asymmetry or imbalance in social relationships that people feel compelled in some way to rectify. In some contexts the norms of the situation may require only that you say a sincere "thank you" to the person who has given you a gift. In other circumstances you may be expected to give that person a gift of equal value sometime in the future (1991a: 90).

The socio-biological theory of altruism emphasises that biological and social conditions develop altruism and that human beings are genetically programmed to be altruistic for the sake of promotion of survival. Within the field of socio-biology, 'kin altruism' is a contemporary view on altruism (Wilson, 1978: 53-56; Degler, 1991: 279-285). Within this discussion, Browning (1992: 422) explains:

> altruism is frequently defined as behavior that appears to sacrifice one's immediate reproductive advantage but which, in the long run, in fact contributes to one's reproductive advantage; i. e, the continuation of a percentage of one's genes in the genes of one's children or close relatives (1992: 422).

Kin altruism is based on the idea that family, partners and close friends are inter-dependent (cf., Campbell, 1998). We may say that kin altruism is based on natural affection towards family and close friends rather than rational choice. In these relationships, solidarity and harmony are emphasised; one pays attention not to what others have done for him or her but to their needs. Kin altruism expands to reciprocal altruism by the notion of the norm of social responsibility, which states that people should help those who are dependent on each other. This norm encourages people to go beyond family and friends and to help strangers.

Emily, a 22-year-old style 1 member of the Jesus Army, is a good example. She joins EDP on Fridays nights and visits prisons as well. Emily says:

> In a church, brotherhood is important. That involves loving people. We love people no matter kind of background. You cannot do anything unless you love somebody. Love is a key to life. Love is not limited to just your natural family. It has to expand beyond that. As a Christian, God gives us big kind of dimension to love all. We share and love people of all different kind of background, culture, and ethnic group. Release something in you, and you can love more people (J28).

Emily talked about both kin altruism and reciprocal altruism.

As examined in chapter six, the members of both the Jesus Army and the FWBO assert the importance of friends, and most of them do not have any family members in their movements. They established their friendships in the movements and they consider that these friendships are more important than their relationship with their natural families (see p. 169). It is interesting to investigate how reciprocal altruism and kin altruism are expressed in these circumstances. As examined in chapter three, the members of the Jesus Army have strong brotherhood based on the covenant bond. They encourage one another, share in sufferings and disappointments, and care for one another. They value communal living and regard themselves as members of a big family, and therefore their attitudes in their movement may be regarded as kin altruism based on the covenant bond with God. However, few members of the Jesus Army talked about kin and reciprocal altruism in a direct way. In contrast, several members of the FWBO talked about reciprocal altruism and rational choice, although the members value spiritual friendship and their altruistic attitudes can be regarded as kin altruism.

Emma, a 36-year-old Order member, affords a clue in considering the above issue. She is working for a charity at a community centre which is unconnected with the FWBO. Emma says:

> I think it is difficult find something which is purely 100 per cent altruistic. I think everything has some elements for one self. Because I enjoy my work and get paid for it. Here [at the London Buddhist Centre] I do sometimes organise courses and do not get paid for it, but I enjoy it as well and it helps my study. People do get something out of it I give and I get something out of it as well (F29).

Emma indeed talked about reward. As seen in chapter seven (see p. 194), Patrick also talked about reciprocity: 'By helping others you are definitely helping yourself' (F13). John, a 45-year-old mitra, is another example. He talks about his future:

> My main interest is people. So I would like to imagine myself in the future, in some way working with people. Whether that will be teaching meditation or Dharma, or another aspect could even be some kind of social work. Basically just helping people, and while working with people I also help myself (F21).

Their altruistic activities may be based on reciprocal altruism. However, Emma adds, 'Teaching meditation and Buddhism and helping people; there is always an opportunity to go a bit further, give a bit more. I suppose it is altruism' (F29). As we have seen in chapter seven, some members of the Jesus Army also talked about rewards. However, they believe that their reward will be given by God.

Many research findings show that good mood and happiness can facilitate altruism (see p.41), and Wuthnow (1995: 67) also points out that individual happiness and the good of others are not incompatible but are in fact linked. In his own survey (1991), many people reported that helping others made them feel good and was a good way of gaining a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment for themselves[2]. Gaining fulfilment for themselves and feeling good can be considered as compensation for the time and energy invested. This is also the case of rational choice. On the other hand, the founder of the FWBO, Sangharakshita, teaches that it is hard to practice charity when one is poor and that one needs a healthy basis from which to give (cf., MITRATA 62, October 1986: 2). In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked about their satisfaction of life (Q20) in order to investigate a relationship with charitable acts (Q16). I found a correlation among the FWBO sample[3], and in the case of the Jesus Army there is no correlation[4]. Further evidence is necessary, but it seems likely that there is a correlation between one's own happiness and altruistic acts in the case of the FWBO.

Stuart is an Order member of the FWBO in his forties. He regards himself as 'quite self-occupied in many ways'. He says, 'I don't know why. I suppose that is how people are. There is a natural tendency to look after yourself. That is not saying that I don't want to sometimes endeavour to be altruistic. I do have time for

[2] In his survey, 51 per cent of the public said they receive a great deal of personal fulfilment from doing things for people; another 38 per cent said they receive a fair amount of fulfilment. Among those currently involved in charitable or social-service activities, 63 per cent said doing things for people was a source of a great deal of fulfilment (Wuthnow, 1991a: 87).

[3] Pearson r = 0.37, Significant beyond .01(.002); Kendall's tau-b: 0.33, Significant byond .01(.000).

[4] Pearson r = 0.05, Significant .0758; Kendall's tau-b: -0.01, Significant .921.

people. I speak to people and treat people kindly' (F20). Stuart thinks that Buddhist teachings are based on regarding other people first, not at the expense of you own self, but more than yourself:

> One of the meditation practices that we do is a kind of direct development of that attitude. So it plays a very important part in the movement. I think what I have also learnt is that it does make you feel good when you do something altruistic. It has that kind of immediate effect (F20).

Laura is another example of rational choice. She is a 46-year-old mitra, and has been in the FWBO for ten years. She lives with her husband and three children. None of them is involved in the FWBO. Laura is involved with the children's school as a school governor. She considers it as a charitable and voluntary activity. Laura recounts the reasons why she is doing that kind of activity:

> Because it is helpful to the children and it helps me. It is good fun and I like working with people. I find that friendships develop through work - Buddhist friendships and other friendships. I like to have something to do, which is completely separate from the immediate concerns of the wellbeing of my small family. It would be quite easy for me to be very occupied with the cleaning, cooking, shopping, washing, organising holidays, but that is really quite a limiting and closed in activity - although I do those things and I do them well. It is for the benefit of a very small group of people and I like to have a window and involvement outside that. Buddhism provides that along with a lot of other things. But the connection with the school provides something of a quite high level of intellectual involvement as well (F10).

Laura chooses which charity to support. She thinks rationally:

> The charities do a lot of advertising and some I support and some I don't. I do support the Karuna Trust through donations to various things around the centre. I support the environmental charities and the civil rights charities, which are not particularly religious; in fact they are quite secular. I would look at what the charity was doing and decide whether I thought that was a good thing. If it were I would support it as far as I could. I wouldn't not support a charity because it wasn't a Buddhist charity (F10).

Indeed, she has supported some Christian charities because she thinks that they do practical work such as providing sanitary arrangements which people need. Laura

says, 'I don't think it matters in the first instance who is providing it. If there were a Buddhist charity doing exactly the same thing I might support that too, or I would probably support a Buddhist charity in preference to a Christian charity' (F10).

People identify themselves largely in terms of what they do. Schmidtz notes:

> individual rationality behooves us to do things that can support the kind of self-conception we would like to have. . . . We desire integrity not only in an internal sense but also in the sense of being integrated into a social structure – functioning well within structures that comprise our environment. We seek real rapport with others, not merely a sham. We want to feel that we belong, and it is our real selves for which we want a sense of belonging, not merely our false facades (1995: 113).

The case of Sylvia, a 43-year-old mitra, is eloquent proof of this. She works for a 'Bric A Brac Shop' which raises money for the London Buddhist Centre and provides cheap clothing for people in the community houses. She encountered the FWBO in 1994 through a leaflet on meditation in a library. She started attending meditation classes and then she started working in the charity shop of the FWBO, because she wanted to help the London Buddhist Centre but she did not have money to support the movement. Since then she has been working full time at the shop. She confesses, 'At first, I needed money to support the FWBO, and now I need my place in the movement to support people. That is why I continue this job' (F27). She regards her job as a kind of social work. Sylvia says, 'A lot of people come in the shop, because they want to talk and see a friendly face. Some of them have problems in their lives. I respond in terms of Buddhism' (F27). She adds, 'Not just in the shop, wherever I am, I try to express generosity. It is part of my ethical practice' (F27). She has chosen rationally the work in the shop, and behind the rational choice there have been altruistic concern. Before joining the FWBO, Sylvia had done a lot of social work.

> I became more stable and more patient. In the past, I did a lot of social work, but I was sometimes very depressed. Buddhism has given me much more balance and positivity. Buddhism gives me direction. Before, I was doing things and trying things the best I could, but I did

> not have direction. I can be generally even friendlier, more positive, and more open. I feel solidarity now (F27).

She feels that she needs her place in the movement to support people. Sylvia may have had the empathetic distress motivation for her social work before, but being integrated into a social structure, she does not seem to have the empathetic distress motivation for her altruistic activities any more.

Kathy, a 29 year-old mitra, has been in the FWBO for seven years, has never done any specific social work, but around the London Buddhist Centre she helped out 'quiet a lot, cleaning and working in the shop'. The London Buddhist Centre organises large retreats which are open to beginners twice a year. There are two members leading the retreats and a team of members supporting them. They organise the cooking and cleaning. Kathy has done a couple of these and considers that 'it does feel very much like we are altruistic during those periods, because we are giving and we are encouraging people to get involved in the Dharma and learn to meditate, if they want to,' (F7). She has also volunteered to work in a gift shop of the FWBO when they needed help, and thinks that 'if there is a need and you are able to help it, it is a good thing'. Kathy regards altruism as 'giving from the best of me', and says, 'It is like being able to give from a purer part of me to something *bigger*. . . . It is like giving yourself up to something bigger. Putting yourself at the service of something *bigger*' (F7; *my emphasis*). Schmidtz (1995: 112) regards this kind of attitude as rational:

> 'We give ourselves more to live for by becoming important parts of something *bigger* than ourselves. A principled character lets us pursue this *wider* integration without losing our own identity' (1995: 122; *my emphasis*).

Kathy's case involves what Wuthnow (1995) calls a 'self-realisation' motivation for altruism. 'Self-realisation' motivation emphasises:

> the personal benefits gained from helping others but focuses less on happiness than on growth. It derives, implicitly at least, less from utilitarian philosophy or popular conceptions of having a good time and more from psychological conceptions of the self and its capacities to be nurtured and to grow. The main idea is that people can achieve their

> full potential only by facing the challenges of caring for others (Wuthnow, 1995: 73).

Thus, we can regard a 'self-realisation' motivation as rational choice. Patrick, a 41-year-old mitra, also talks about self-realisation: 'We all try to live up to the Bodhisattva ideal and we constantly fail. But by actually attempting to do that we can create a bigger person who can work with tensions and can be with others' (F13).

Kathy also thinks that 'if it is something that you are able to engage with, or there is some sort of emotional connection with something, then it is easy to give your time' (F7). Kathy's altruism does not seem to involve self-sacrifice. Instead, we may say that her altruism is based on rational choice.

Soteriology

Religion has been always concerned with soteriology. Wilson notes:

> The central religious question is, 'what shall we do to be saved?' The answers to it justify religious practice. Just what salvation means varies from one culture to another, and so do the ways of attaining it. Men may seek salvation from immediate and pressing ills that afflict them; or salvation may be seen as the liberation of a people and the establishment of a new political dispensation; or it may be a preoccupation with benefit after death. Salvation extends from therapeutic relief to transcendental reassurance or social transformation (1970: 21).

Altruistic acts of the members of NRMs may be also motivated by the quest for salvation, because the quest for salvation can produce certain consequences for practical behaviour in the world. Weber notes:

> It is most likely to acquire such a positive orientation to mundane affairs as the result of a conduct of life which is distinctively determined by religion and given coherence by some central meaning or positive goal. In other words, a quest for salvation in any religious group had the strongest chance of exerting practical influences when there has arisen, out of religious motivations, a systematizaion of practical conduct resulting from an orientation to certain integral values (1978: 528).

Weber (1978: 532-534) discusses salvation attained through good work. He assumes two different forms of a developing systematisation of an ethic of good work.

In the first form, 'the particular actions of an individual in quest of salvation, whether virtuous or wicked actions, can be evaluated singly and credited to or subtracted from the individual's account' (ibid.: 533). The second form treats 'individual actions as symptoms and expressions of an underlying ethical total personality' (ibid.: 533). Although Weber distinguishes the two forms, he concludes that these two produce very similar practical results. Weber remarks:

> the social and ethical quality of actions falls into secondary importance, while the religious effort expended upon oneself becomes of primary importance. Consequently, religious good works with a social orientation become mere instruments of *self-perfection*: a methodology of salvation (ibid.: 534).

If the ministry of Jesus was a paradigm of altruism, his death, as interpreted by his followers, was its ultimate manifestation. For Christians, states Novak (1992: 9), 'Jesus is the altruistic man who died for others as he had lived for them. Altruism is the very stuff of the Christian God'. In Christianity, however, the terms 'agape' or 'love' are usually used instead of the term 'altruism' (cf., Jennings, 1996; Rigby & O'Grady, 1989). Browning (1992: 422) remarks '*Agape*, the Greek word most often used to refer to the rule or law of love in the New Testament, is defined in many Protestant sources as entailing primarily impartial, self-sacrificial action on behalf of the other and without regard to oneself'. However, only 'the religious virtuosi' can achieve the extreme self-sacrificial formulations of the Christian concept of love that exclude all self-regarding motives. Weber (1978: 539) remarks 'not everyone possesses the charisma that makes possible the continuous maintenance in everyday life of the distinctive religious mood which assures the lasting certainty of grace'. The extreme self-sacrificial formulations of the Christian concept of love symbolised by the cross have the possibility to deny kin altruism and reciprocal altruism. The extreme self-sacrificial formulations may be too hard for 'the average person' to practise. Consequently, as Browning (1991: 423) points out, in stark contrast to the initial goals, these extreme self-sacrificial

formulations may fail to extend natural kin altruism to the wider community, or rather function to diminish wider altruism.

Nevertheless, some members of the Jesus Army talked about self-sacrifice in their interviews. For them, 'salvation may be viewed as the distinctive gift of active ethical behavior performed in the awareness that god directs this behavior, i.e., that the actor is an instrument of god' (Weber, 1978: 541). Weber (1978: 541) calls this type of attitude 'ascetic'. Among interviewees of the Jesus Army 'world-rejecting asceticism' were found. The idea of 'World-rejecting asceticism' is that:

> Concentration upon the actual pursuit of salvation may entail a formal withdrawal from the 'world': from social and psychological ties with the family, from the possession of worldly good, and from political, economic, artistic, and erotic activities – in short, from all creaturely interests. One with such an attitude may regard any participation in these affairs as an acceptance of the world, leading to alienation from god (Weber, 1978: 542).

The members of the Jesus Army live simply. They are ethically conservative: single men and women are carefully segregated and sexual intercourse within marriage is primarily for procreation. Nearly 300 men and women are committed to celibacy.

Tony, a 49-year-old style 3 member, is celibate. He joins EDP on Wednesdays and Fridays and visits prisons as well, in order to make friends and help them. He seeks to reach out to homeless people and people in distress. Tony thinks that he was already a caring person before joining the Jesus Army. However, he says, 'I am a more caring, stronger, and wiser person. I have learned so much. I have a new life. I am changing all the time. I have given my will to God. I do what God wants me to do' (J30). Tony's altruistic acts are, he believes, acts of service to God. Meg, a 23-year-old style 1 member, talks about sacrifice:

> [The Jesus Army] has taught me sacrifice. Seeing how others have sacrificed themselves for me and for each other, and knowing that they would rather see me fulfilled than themselves, I have changed. I believe God made me change, and through that belief the friendships have come. I feel that because of God's work we have to live for others as well as ourselves (J7).

Meg seeks to help God's work, and believes that her altruistic acts are for the greater glory of God.

Clara (J29), a 24-year-old woman, started living in one of the community houses of the Jesus Army three years ago when she felt 'genuine love' there. She joins EDP on Friday nights. She thinks EDP is the best way to reach people.

> You have something to offer people on the street. Jesus says that if you see someone hungry, feed them. I get very excited to see people finding a release from drugs or whatever. God heals people. God changes people. That makes me to go out and help people (J29).

The reason why she wants to reach that kind of people is that 'Jesus said that. He did it. He looked at the lowest people that other people ignored' (J29). She believes that Jesus is the only way for them to get out of addiction or the difficulty. Clara visits prisons as well. She says, 'I find it hard to visit the prison and talk in front of thirty men. It is a sacrifice and hopefully God is going to bless the sacrifice that I make. Even though I find it a bit hard, but still I want to do it' (J29).

Drusilla, a style 2 member, talks about the salvation by God and eschatology:

> I believe that God is a just God, and that His heart is not for some people to be poor and for some to be rich or for some people to be suffering. God loves everybody. Before Jesus, God required some active sacrifice as atonement for sins, you know, like the killing of an animal, like a lamb or something. One day God will judge each and every one of us, but God is not wanting anyone to suffer now. God has a purpose by everything, and we cannot always know what it is now. One day we will know, but I don't know now. I have just got to trust God (J3).

In the case of the FWBO, the doctrine of karma seems to influence its members' attitudes. The doctrine of karma is the most complete formal solution of the problem of theodicy. Weber presents the doctrine of karma as follows:

> This world is viewed as completely connected and self-contained cosmos of ethical retribution. Guilt and merit within this world are unfailingly compensated by fate in the successive lives of the soul, which may be reincarnated innumerable times in animal, human, or even divine forms. Ethical merits in this life can make possible rebirth into life in heaven, but that life can last only until one's credit balance of merits has been completely used up. The finiteness of earthly life is the consequence of the finiteness of good or evil deeds in the previous life of a particular soul. What may appear from the viewpoint of retribution as unjust

> suffering in the present life of a person should be regarded as atonement for sin in a previous existence. Each individual forges his own destiny exclusively, and in the strictest sense of the world (Weber, 1978: 524, 525).

Buddhism teaches the laws of karma, or the principle of cause and effect. Perhaps the laws of karma can be briefly summarised in the old saying, 'You have made your bed and now you must lie on it.' A good cause will have a good effect and a bad cause will have a bad effect. All phenomena in the universe are the results of causes and circumstances that induce phenomena. All beings are linked to such interrelationships.

> Sangharakshita describes the principle of *karma* as stating the relationship between willed action and its experienced effect . . . The states of mind with which we act shape the kind of experiences we will have: skilful actions based on healthy mental states will produce pleasurable experiences, and unskilful actions based on unwholesome states lead to suffering. However, though mind or consciousness determines experience, according to the law of *karma*, Sangharakshita points out that each fresh mental event arises out of a context of past and present experience. Our minds may determine what kind of experience of the world we are to have, but those experiences of the world provide the conditions within which our minds then operate (Subhuti, 1994: 222, 223).

Perrett (1987: 71-77) argues that a familiar opposition in Western ethical theory between egoism and altruism does not figure in Buddhist ethics because the Buddhist account of the self defuses the whole question. The 'no-self' doctrine in Buddhism insists upon a denial of a substantialist view of the self: the self in Buddhism is held to be a cluster of past, present and future 'selves' connected to each other by ties of various degrees. Perrett (ibid.) explains this by quoting remarks of Collins:

> the rationale for action which acceptance of Buddhism furnishes provides neither for simple self-interest nor for self-denying altruism. The attitude to all 'individualities', whether past and future 'selves', past, future, or contemporary 'others' is the same – loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. . . Buddhism conceives . . . a version of rational action which includes necessarily the dimension of altruism (Collins, 1982: 193-194).

Moreover, Perrett (1987: 78-82) refers to the opposition between intentionalism and consequentialism. Intentionalism is the view that the moral value of an action is a function of the nature of the actor's intentions. Kant's moral philosophy which emphasises the deontological purity of the actor's intention is an example. On the other hand, consequentialism is the view that the moral value of an action is a function of its consequences. Utilitarianism is an example of the view. Perrett (1987: 81) states 'while Buddhist ethics is strongly intentionalist, it is also strongly consequentialist. This combination is made possible by the metaphysical presupposition of the doctrine of *karma*.' Perrett (ibid.) concludes this by quoting remarks of Gombrich (1971: 246) '*Karma* is nothing more or less than intention . . . But by the law of *karma* every intention good or bad will eventually be rewarded or punished, so prudence and true morality must necessarily coincide.'

Kevin, a 33-year-old Order member, says:

> The teaching of karma is to do with ethics. It works on a moral level. The teaching of karma is fundamental to a Buddhist view of ethics in that the teaching of karma says if you act in a skilful way then skilful consequences follow and if you act in an unskilful way then unskilful consequences follow. And those consequences do effect the person who is reacting (F30).

However, Kevin does not necessarily think that 'if people are suffering, it is a result of their unskilful actions in the past', because there are various other factors which affect people's lives[5]. He says:

> 'Just let people suffer because it must be karma.' It is a Hindu notion of karma. I agree that some Buddhists may have that view, but I think it is a misapprehension. That seems to be completely different from Buddhism, which is about trying to develop compassion (F30).

[5] 'while a phenomenon like disability may be the result of *karma*, it may equally be the result of another cause, such as a biological one. We just cannot be certain. . . . There is no retributive element in the Buddhist teaching on *karma*. The law of *karma* simply states that all volitional actions inevitably have consequences. Just like the law of physics, you don't need a judge for it to work – so there is no basis for notions of guilt or punishment' (Dharma Life No. 10, Spring 1999: 6).

Although he always tries to act altruistically, that is not enough for him. He says, 'the teaching of karma, of course, is also fundamental in a sense of action, however it is not just the action of the body, but the actions of speech, and the action of thought' (F30).

Chapter summary

In the questionnaire survey, religious motives and altruistic motives were found to be more likely to induce members of both movements to perform charitable activities than instrumental and obligatory motives (see p.200, 201). Although there was no motivation for their charitable acts which was common to all the members, there were three distinct motivations to be found: 'empathy', 'rational choice' and 'soteriology'.

The interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about empathy by using the term 'compassion'. They stated that they felt compassion for those people who were suffering and that their compassion came from God. The members reached out to those suffering people and showed the same compassion as God shows them. On the other hand, some members of the FWBO talked about their own distress. When they felt sorry for those who were suffering, they felt empathetic distress themselves. However, they claimed that their empathetic distress had been alleviated since they started practising in the FWBO. As far as the interviews are concerned, the empathetic distress motivation was not detected in the case of the Jesus Army, and the members linked their compassion in a more positive way with the compassion of God.

In the case of several interviewees of the FWBO, their motivation for altruistic acts was based on rational choice in the sense that they calculate the reciprocal benefit of members, but this calculation of benefit of a this-worldly kind is not their primary objective of their altruism. Moreover, the questionnaire survey suggested that there was a correlation between members' own happiness and their

altruistic acts in the case of the FWBO (see p.209), while interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about joy and happiness they gain after altruistic, and they believe that joy and happiness come from God as reward. Moreover, a member of the FWBO talked about a desire for being integrated into a social structure, and another member of the FWBO talked about the pursuit of the wider integration. Overall, the altruistic acts of the members of the FWBO are more likely to be based on rational choice than for members of the Jesus Army.

The third motivation we have discussed in this chapter was soteriological. The interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about self-sacrifice, acts of service to God, helping God's work, and acts for the greater glory of God. They believe that God will bless their acts. On the other hand, the soteriology in the FWBO is based on the doctrine of karma and 'no-self' doctrine. The FWBO members have recourse to this doctrine to legitimatise their altruistic acts. Thus, the rational choices of the members of the FWBO and the doctrine of karma seem to be linked.

Moving on from my analysis of the motivation for altruism, I now turn to the question of how members attributed the development of their altruism.

9. Development of altruism in the Jesus Army and the FWBO

Chapter seven examined the altruistic activities of the members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO, and discussed the meanings and constructions of their altruism. The previous chapter investigated the motivations for their altruism. Finally, this chapter will examine the central question of this thesis: in what way NRMs make members' attitudes positively towards altruism. As stated in chapter one, my hypothesis is that the more intensely the members are committed to the activities and practices of NRMs, the more altruistic they become, and consequently the members are more likely to help people in need than before they joined NRMs. As Nelson and Dynes (1976: 48-49) suggest, if the symbolic religious reinforcement[1] through religious reality construction[2] promotes altruism, then, altruistic behaviour rates and levels of religious devotion should be directly related.

By analysing the data of the European Values Study, Gerard (1985: 220) concludes that education, income, and age were not correlated with charitable activities, whereas the importance of religious factors were found to correlate with charitable activities. Novak (1992) points out two factors of religion which develop altruism: moral preachment and contemplative practice such as prayer and meditation. Of the respondents of the Jesus Army in this survey, as Table 9.1 shows, neither previous religiosity (Q4), commitment of their family to charitable activities in their childhood (Q18), their commitment to charitable activities before joining their movements (Q19), nor education (Q26) were found to correlate with charitable acts. As to the influence of the movement, I did not find any correlation

[1] Regarding symbolic religious reinforcement, Durkheim noted 'The believer who has communed with his god is not simply a man who sees new truths that the unbeliever knows not; he is a man who is stronger' (1995: 419).

[2] Religious reality construction is 'a subset of the more general process by which actors order and interpret experiences in ways which "make sense" to them' (Nelson & Dynes, 1976: 48). In contrast to secular reality construction, religious reality construction produces cosmic legitimation, by which people interpret experiences (cf. Berger, 1967).

of charitable acts with the length of years in the Jesus Army (Q2), the frequency of prayer (Q8) and subjective commitment to the Jesus Army(Q10), while there was a correlation with frequency of reading the Bible (Q9).

Table 9.1

Correlation of charitable acts in the Jesus Army

Previous religiosity (Q4)	0.01
Commitment of family to charitable activities in childhood (Q18)	-0.07
Commitment to charitable activities before joining the movement (Q19)	-0.09
Education (Q26)	-0.26
Length of years in the movement (Q2)	-0.01
Frequency of prayer (Q8)	0.05
Frequency of reading of the Bible (Q9)	0.39 *
Subjective commitment to the movement (Q10)	-0.06

* Significant beyond .05

Table 9.2

Correlation of charitable acts in the FWBO

Previous religiosity (Q4)	0.11
Commitment of family to charitable activities in childhood (Q18)	0.28 *
Commitment to charitable activities before joining the movement (Q19)	0.12
Education (Q26)	-0.20
Length of years in the movement (Q2)	0.04
Frequency of meditation (Q8)	0.08
Frequency of reading of Buddhist teachings (Q9)	0.15
Subjective commitment to the movement (Q10)	0.15

* Significant beyond .05

In the case of the FWBO, as Table 9.2 shows, commitment of their family to charitable activities in their childhood (Q18) was correlated with charitable acts, while the others were not found to correlate with charitable acts. However, these results do not seem to mean that no aspect of the movements has affected the members' attitudes towards altruism. It seems that there are other reasons for these results.

First, there are problems concerning the measurement of altruism, such as the limitations of self-report measures and the assumption of behavioural consistency (see p.24, 25). Second, there may be perhaps other factors not listed in the questionnaire which affect positively the members' attitudes towards altruism. Third, there are various factors which build and enhance personalities, and their development differs from individual to individual. Moreover, it is probable that the development of altruism can not be attributed to just one factor. It is therefore, necessary to examine interviews with members closely. The mean age of interviewees of the Jesus Army is 32.1 years old, whilst that of the FWBO is 38.0 years old[3]. They are not teenagers, but are old enough so that we do not need to consider the case that people naturally become more altruistic as they grow up.

The interviewees were asked how the movement affected their attitudes. As mentioned in chapter one (see p. 31), there was anxiety that the members would be inclined to answer in terms of how they ought to be rather than how they were and that the more exemplary the members were, the more similar their answers, since their ideal images were formed by the teachings of their movement. However, the apprehensions proved unnecessary. The interviewees related their transformation of attitudes in various ways. Although there were a few interviewees who did not mention altruism, most of them said that they became

[3] Regarding the questionnaire survey, as examined in chapter five (see p. 117), the mean age of the respondents of the Jesus Army was 31.7 years old, whereas that of the FWBO was 39.7 years old. Hence, it seems reasonable to suppose that the interviewees are representative of each of the movements.

more caring, kinder, or more altruistic since they joined their movements. Some accounts of interviewees involve a few different factors in the development of their altruism, but we may consider these under the following three heads: (1) teachings and religious practices; (2) role model; and (3) community and friendship. Let us begin with teachings and religious practice.

Teachings and religious practices

The founder of the Jesus Army, Noel Stanton says:

> We battle against 'the spiritual rulers of this present darkness'. . . . The New Testament tells us to 'make sure the bugle gives a distinctive battle call'. At the second coming of Jesus Christ, the trumpet will sound! So, churches are to be fighting armies. The Jesus Fellowship is also named Jesus Army. As one of our slogans puts it, we are called to show Love, Power and Sacrifice, loving people in the power of the Holy Spirit with lives lived sacrificially for *the benefit of others* (my emphasis) ('Jesus Life', No. 42, 4th Quarter 1997: 3).

Love is one of the core teachings of Christianity. The love commandment, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . soul . . . and mind . . . and you shall love your neighbour as yourself' (Matt. 22: 37) is popular among Christians. There are variations on the theme of this love commandment in the New Testament (Matt. 19: 19, 22: 39; Mark 12:31, 12: 33; Luke 10: 27; Rom. 13: 3; Gal. 5: 14; James 2: 8). Wuthnow points out:

> compassion is mentioned 41 times in the Bible, the word "kindness" is used 45 times, and love is referred to more than 450 times. With so much material to work with, every denomination and faith has produced its distinctive interpretations of why and how people should love their neighbors (1991a: 157).

Altruism stems from both the direct teachings of Christ to help others, as well as from what Christ actually did (Chen, 1988: 45). Jean, a 45-year-old style 2 member of the Jesus Army, mentioned the Bible when she was talking about her altruism. Liam, a 43-year-old style 3 member, also referred to the Bible. There were few members who mentioned religious practice such as prayer when they were talking

about their altruism, whereas over fifty per cent of them pray more than once a day (see p. 154).

In contrast, there were many members of the FWBO who mentioned the teachings and meditation when they were talking about their altruism. In early Buddhist texts, especially in Theravada Buddhism there is an emphasis on four states of mind called 'brahma-vihara' in Pali (Divine Abidings in English): 'metta' (loving kindness), 'karuna' (compassion), 'mudita' (joy at the joy of others), and 'upekkha' (equanimity). 'Metta' and 'karuna' are comparable to 'agape' in Christianity. Metta and karuna are understood to be closely related, but metta is the intention and capacity to bring joy and happiness to others while karuna is the intention and capacity to relieve the suffering of others (Jennings, 1996: 211; Nhat Hanh, 1993: 20). Karuna, its desire to relieve the suffering of all sentient beings, and dána (giving, generosity) in Mahayana Buddhism are central concepts with the view of the 'self' and its altruistic concern for the 'other'. The Bodhisattva is the embodiment and manifestation of karuna. A Bodhisattva is considered as one who is qualified to become a Buddha, but who, because of great compassion and concern, chooses to delay final enlightenment until all other beings are delivered (Jennings, 1996: 211). However, the founder of the FWBO, Sangharakshita says, 'the Bodhisattva Ideal does not represent altruism as opposed to individualism . . . The Bodhisattva synthesises opposites. In this case he synthesises the opposites of helping oneself and helping others, individualism and altruism' (MITRATA 62, October 1986: 4). His teachings influence the members. As seen in chapter seven (see p. 195), one of the interviewees says, 'I do not think that altruism is totally orientated towards other people. We have to take ourselves into account. We have to feed ourselves and look after ourselves' (F15).

The FWBO states in their brochure (Vessantara, 1996: 6) that 'Buddhism is a tradition of teaching and practice that helps people to unfold the inner riches of love, wisdom, and energy that lie within us all' and that one of the facets of Enlightenment is, 'a source of infinite compassion, of boundless love for all beings.'

Sangharakshita regards the Bodhisattva Ideal as the altruistic dimension of Going for Refuge (see p. 92), which is the basic act in terms of the arising of the *bodhicitta*, the 'will to Enlightenment' to go forwards on the path for the benefit of all beings. One of the senior Order members, Subhuti writes:

> There cannot really be two separate paths, one individualistic and one altruistic . . . The spiritual path is of its very nature altruistic, a growth in harmony, friendship, and compassion. Ultimately it completely transcends even the distinction between self and other. Going for Refuge means becoming more and more altruistic (1994: 93).

Kevin, a 33-year-old Order member, recounts Buddhist ethics and altruism. He says:

> There are those people who are naturally ethical without religions. So the difference is that people in the FWBO are deliberately and consciously trying to work on their minds and behaviour to become more ethical. Buddhist ethics is very much to do with being more altruistic. In Buddhist ethics, you cannot call the action ethical or skilful unless it companies by a state of mind that is loving and generous or wise in some way. In Buddhism it is not enough for me to help somebody if a motivation is selfish in any way in a sense. That is a very conscious thing. But I have met people who work for a charity or are doing a good work, but actually also they are quite angry people. They are inconsistent in a mental attitude and in personal relationships. For example, some people who are doing a good work at charities and then go home and are not so skilful in a relationship with their family. Buddhism is very much about trying to develop as a whole in a way (F30).

As seen in chapter eight (see p. 204, 205), Bill, a 35-year-old mitra, talked about the empathetic distress motivation he had had before he met the FWBO. However, the empathetic distress seems to have been alleviated. Bill says, 'My emotional responses to suffering have changed. I can see it more as whole. I can see it more broadly. The quality of response to that kind of thing has changed. Perhaps it is now a more Buddhist response and a more metaphor response' (F25). Bill was already altruistic when he met the FWBO, but the quality of his altruism seems to have changed. He is convinced that Buddhist teachings and meditation offer something special to people's own lives. Bill mentioned not only the transformation of the individuals but also the transformation of the world. He states:

> I believe that ultimately what the world needs is Buddhism. Buddhism has a positive effect on people and helps them to work on their life. I believe that we are very effective in the world. The social ills of the world will be eliminated through people practising Buddhism and people relating to each other through loving-kindness (F25).

The FWBO has a perspective of the personal development associated with social change. The founder of the FWBO, Sangharakshita writes:

> The individual Buddhist, does not go for Refuge to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha alone or in isolation. He or she goes for Refuge in the company of other individuals who also go for Refuge. He or she is a member of the Sangha or spiritual community in the wider sense and it is this Sangha, and not so much the individual Buddhist alone or in isolation, that raises the level of consciousness of people living in Western society, changes that society by creating Western Buddhist institutions, introduces the fundamental ideas of Buddhism into Western intellectual discourse, and interacts with Western fine arts, music, and literature. It is this wider spiritual community that effects the psychological, social, economic, and cultural integration of Buddhism into Western society (1992a: 17, 18).

Emma, a 36-year-old Order member, had never done any particular charitable work before she joined the FWBO. Emma has been in the FWBO for 13 years, and is now working for a charity at a community centre which is unrelated to the FWBO. She works as a full time social worker and gets paid for her work. She says, 'The meditation, Metta Bhavana is totally altruistic. At the beginning, people might find it hard or go through difficult things in themselves, but in the long term, people become more altruistic in the FWBO' (F29). Over ten years, she was intensively involved in the FWBO. That was good for her 'spiritual development', she says, 'Then, I reached the point that I wanted broader contact and my own perspective. It is like a test really. Can I still maintain my integrity and my practice in another situation?' (F29). Emma talked about meditation 'Metta Bhavana' as an important practice for the development of altruism. As seen in chapter four (see p. 96) Metta Bhavana means the development or cultivation of loving kindness in Pali. The FWBO states in its brochure:

> By using communication exercises and meditations like the Metta Bhavana, we work to develop an open outward-going interest in other people. We also encourage people to build deep friendships. This

> emphasis that we place on friendship is quite possibly one of the most important things we have to offer. . . . To make a deep friendship with another human being involves going beyond our own concerns and self-interest to meet them half-way (Vessantara, 'The FWBO: An Introduction', 1996: 28, 29).

As seen in chapter six (see p. 157), about eighty per cent of the respondents of the questionnaire survey meditate at least once a day. Laura, a 46-year-old mitra, claims that she has cultivated her altruism through the meditation practice. She has been in the FWBO for ten years. Laura recounts the transformation and its cause. She says:

> I think I am kinder towards other people. I think I am more relaxed with other people now. I tend to trust other people. I think I am more trusting of myself as well. The meditation practice has helped that in particular but also the study. I think I am calmer and confident and more trusting of my own judgement, and as a result of that I probably have a more helpful and more outward going response to other people. I am less easily put off by other people. I think I have a healthier attitude to other people, not necessarily in any particular spiritual, doctrinal sort of way, but in a happy, healthy, human way. I think I have a better sense of humour about people and relating to them (F10).

She has changed in many ways. She attributed the transformation to the meditation practice and the studying of Buddhism.

Grace, a 40-year-old editor of a journal about health, is a 'Friend' of the FWBO. She does not have any commitment to Buddhism yet; she has attended meditation for three months; she has not yet attended a course on Buddhism. Grace says:

> I am fascinated by people who are Buddhists like a teacher here [the London Buddhist Centre]. He gives me the idea of being very peaceful at heart, but I think the practice of loving kindness in the meditation class is very difficult to do. It is a good idea, but difficult to get in touch with my feeling. I admire the quality but I do not think I am very compassionate in my life. I think I am by nature or upbringing very intolerant. I would like to change it (F1).

Grace does not think that she has cultivated her altruism yet.

In contrast to Grace, Jessica, a 45-year-old 'Friend' of the FWBO, is becoming more aware of altruism through just attending meditation classes for three months. Jessica says, 'When I am sitting in a class, I get some sort of

peacefulness, and become aware of myself. I think maybe it is a kind of serenity. I feel if I could be very calm, no matter what happens in my life I would feel very well' (F4). She finds all other religions interesting too, but she does not think that there are ideas that she could use practically in her daily life. She believes that she has definitely moved away from the Jewish culture which she was brought up in. She claims that she needs some spiritual structures or new ideas now. Jessica says:

> I am compassionate sort of towards the world and nature in general, but towards people in particular sometimes I don't think I am compassionate. I can get very irritated and annoyed with people. Becoming more detached, sometimes I just think somebody has not right to be in my way. But that's getting better, as I get more aware of my defects through meditation. I'll get more compassionate. I feel a sort of great compassion generally towards humanity but sometimes I'm heated up against individuals. I know it's not a good feeling, and I don't want to hold this feeling. I want to change it and I think I am changing (F4).

Jeff, a 55-year-old Order member, is running an art and cultural project for the Karuna Trust. He believes that meditation has helped him enormously to become much more integrated, happier, more contented, and that he is less prone to swings of mood or emotions. Jeff states:

> the benefit of understanding Buddhism is that there is not such an existential crisis hovering around my life any more.... We are capable of skilful actions and unskilful actions, and one has to work on one's mind and one's heart, so that one can condition oneself to act skilfully. But it is a training. I think we get trained to do that. There is also such a thing as nature. Some people seem - maybe because of previous lives - to have a nature better well disposed towards skilful action than others do. But even then they have to keep practising that in order to develop the capacity to be skilful. That is where meditation and Buddhism comes in. It helps one to act skilfully, kindly, generously, and non-egocentrically. The basis of good action and bad actions is the ability to be non-egocentric, to have a regard for other and to have an aspiration to help other (F16).

Jeff considers that he has altruistic tendencies. He has been working very hard in India and his health has suffered. He is aware that his own particular network of friendships has suffered and his living situation has suffered. Jeff says, 'I have to also look after myself a bit, in order to be in a strong position to help others. There

has to be a balance. Altruism depends on a healthy self as well' (F16). Jeff talked about the balance between caring himself and helping others. He has been practising in the FWBO for 22 years; he seems to be well acquainted with the teachings of Sangharakshita. In his teachings of the Bodhisattva Ideal, Sangharakshita puts emphasis on the synthesis of the opposite of helping oneself and helping others (see p. 225) and on a healthy basis from which to give (see p. 209).

Kathy, a 29 year-old mitra, has been in the FWBO for seven years. She says, 'I used to think of myself as the centre of the universe. I still do sometimes. That is what I am trying to change, but it is a very slow process' (F7). She recognises that the transformation of her attitude has occurred and that the development of her altruism has advanced gradually. Kathy considers that 'going out to others is what altruism is about', and says, 'Yes, that is happening for me. My meditation practice is having an effect' (F7). Kathy meditates every day and attributes the development of her altruism mainly to meditation. However, other factors can be detected in her life-style. She has been working at the art centre of the FWBO with other members for four years and lives in one of the community houses now. 'My life is very much centred around here [the London Buddhist Centre]. I live and work around here' (F7). Such deep commitment to the FWBO and relationship with other members also seem to support the development of her altruism. She says:

> I hope my attitude has changed. I think it has. Firstly, I think of myself in a much better way than I used to. I think more positively about myself and I think also more positively about other people. I hope that I am kinder, because I am aware that what I say and do will have an effect on people. So I do try, but don't always succeed. I live from a basis of ethics, which means considering other people. There are a couple of members of my family who I didn't used to get on with and over the last few years that has changed quite a lot (F7).

We shall examine the contribution of community and friendships to the development of members' altruism later.

Role model

Drusilla, a style 2 member of the Jesus Army, is a nurse by profession. She says:

> I like being obedient to God, and to hear what his calling in my life is. At the moment I am part of a team going into Holloway Prison, and meeting some women in there. I love that ministry; I love reaching out to people who are forgotten by the world. I have a growing heart for the poor. I care about Mother Teresa and the work she has done all over the world, and I would like to reach poor people more and more, and teenagers who might be searching in life, before they might make some mistakes. Well we all make mistakes, but I would like to reach them with the love of Jesus and let them know that there is God who cares for them (J3).

In the research on caring by Wuthnow (1995: 135), many regarded Mother Teresa[4] as the most compassionate person in the world, although a few admitted that they could not relate to her because she was celibate or too dedicated. In the case of Drusilla, Mother Teresa is a role model of altruism. Drusilla is also celibate to dedicate her life to God.

For Liam, Jesus is the role model of his altruism (see p. 190), 'Jesus to me was a servant to mankind, and my vision is to be a servant to people' (J13). On the other hand, for Jean, a 45-year old nurse, being the Good Samaritan is a part of her life as a Christian (see p. 191). Wuthnow's survey (1991a) shows a positive relationship between knowing the story of the Good Samaritan and being involved in charitable activities[5]. The value of the Good Samaritan story was also evident in his survey from the number of people who saw it as a part of their experience: there was a strong positive relationship between having an experience of this kind and actually being involved in charitable work[6]. Beside simply being able to tell the

[4] Mother Teresa died in 1997.

[5] Two-thirds of those who were currently involved in charitable or social-service activities knew the story, compared with only four in ten among those who were not currently involved. Viewed differently, among those who knew the story, 40 per cent were involved in charitable activities, but among those who did not know the story only 21 per cent were involved (Wuthnow, 1991a: 161).

[6] Among those who were involved in charitable work, 72 per cent said they had experienced something that reminded them of the Good Samaritan, compared with 53 per cent of those who were not involved in charitable work (Wuthnow, 1991a: 162).

story, many indicated that they had experienced something personally, and that these kinds of experience reminded them of the parable of the Good Samaritan, whereas just listening to good stories such as the parable of the Good Samaritan may have no effect on people's attitudes towards altruism (Darley & Batson, 1973).

Altruism may be inspired by role models which are generally close at hand. Wuthnow (1995: 150) argues that 'our parents showed us the meaning of caring by relating to us as whole persons, sometimes stepping out of their role as parents just to be our friends. Role models do the same thing. We admire them because they stopped being teachers or coaches or pastors . . .'

Flora, a 40-year-old style 3 member of the Jesus Army, thinks that she has become more compassionate. She talks about role models:

> The teachings certainly have helped, but I think that more than the teaching, especially in my early years in the church, seeing the example of other brothers and sisters who were in leadership positions often; seeing their selflessness, giving their lives, some in very unobtrusive ways; I found that very inspiring. Also reading all sorts of Christian books, the inspiration of the missionaries, people who have laid down their lives have inspired me too. Missionaries and martyrs; I have been inspired by the realisation of how much ahead of us they are. I feel that if Jesus is worth living for then he is worth making sacrifices for. I don't mean in any glamorous way, but I am speaking of the sacrifice of living my life the way he wants me to live it (J4).

Flora is celibate in order to dedicate her whole life to serve God. She has a leadership position among female members. She assists female members and leads a couple of small female groups. However, she is careful about her authority, she says, 'I do not think that leadership is so much to do with titles, but more to do with what God has done within your heart. Anybody can have a title, but they do not necessarily lead people. I have always been inspired by the heart, rather than by title' (J4). Her prudence in authority may mean that she is not happy with the male dominant authority which exists in the Jesus Army. She adds at the end, 'I hope to inspire newcomers as a friendly example' (J4).

Kevin, a 33-year-old Order member, talks about the importance of role models:

What influences me the most is to come into contact with people who are more altruistic than I am. That influences me when I see someone live very generously, lots of love and warmth towards others, that influences me more than studying ethics in an abstract way. So I think there is a necessity to study and understand the ethical principles, but also the necessity to come into contact and communication and human relationship with people who are more spiritually developed; more altruistic; more other regarding (F30).

Patrick, a 41-year-old mitra, had been enormously frustrated before by the way people acted egoistically, trying to win and crushing others on the way. He says, 'Part of me obviously wanted to do that, but another part of me felt there should be space for everybody in society and not just the fittest or the one who could shout the loudest or fight the hardest' (F13).

> I missed out as a youngster in taking care of myself. I suppose I let my parents do that. As an adult I had to start taking care of myself in a friendly way. So if I failed at things I didn't have to beat myself up all of the time and feel terrible. The teachings at FWBO are particularly clear and I find that a relief. It gives a clear context to what I am doing. I have developed warmth and friendliness to myself as well as to others. I think Buddhism has helped me to be a bit more sympathetic to myself and to give myself what I need (F13).

Patrick acknowledges that the practice of meditation has helped him to have 'more clarity to calm down and less anxiety', but he talks about another factor which has affected him:

> The people around me who have been practising longer seem very good and healthy. They are good role models for other people like myself. And I am also a role model to others who have just got involved. It doesn't mean to say that we are saints, and I think it is good to appreciate that it is not all utopia. We can't just steamroll our own wants and needs onto others all of the time. By giving to others I can also give to myself. I think overall the FWBO has turned me around completely by giving me a stronger foundation and belief in myself. It has also helped me to acknowledge the space for other, in terms of a higher other. You can draw on the strength of the Bodhisattva and the Buddha. I think there is a similar faculty there in terms of devotion as one would have in a Christian faith towards God. I think I have a strong desire to serve a higher purpose (F13).

New converts can find the role model and ethical incentives, which will instil a sense of altruism in them and then they can carry it into their own life.

The next point to be addressed is 'community and friendship', which seems to be the central factor of the development of their altruism.

Community and friendship

Duncan, a 43-year-old style 2 member, has been a member of the Jesus Army for over five years. Although he lives with his wife outside the residential communities, he claims that his commitment to the Jesus Army is strong. During this research period, he always attended worship on Sundays. Duncan says:

> During my five years with the Jesus Army I have met all sorts of people, and I found that before I came to this church I did not accept such a wide variety of differences. For instance, I meet sometimes people who come from the street like beggars; the sort of people I would not have previously looked at, and this gives me the opportunity to say, well, 'this is another human being, no matter how he appears', and this gives me the opportunity to have the growth of grace in my life; the love of all people. I have not arrived at this state of grace, far from it, but I am learning to love people, with the help of God's love and His spirit. I am learning to understand people more, which I see as part of love (J1).

Duncan has developed his love for others through meeting different types of people.

Liam, a 43-year-old style 3 member, also has met different types of people in the Jesus Army. He has been in the Jesus Army for twenty years. When he first came to the Jesus Army, he was 'a very enclosed and withdrawn person, a loner.' He was lonely, independent, isolated and individualistic. Although he had been brought up in a large family, he found socialisation difficult. He did not easily get on with people at all, and he used to prefer his own company. He says, 'God has made me a social person who enjoys people and relationships' (J13). Practically speaking, it seems that his friendships within the community house have changed his character:

> I was an intellectual type of character before. I was interested in ideas, and in what the truth was. I used to read a lot of philosophy. I read all the classics. But over the years of community living it has developed my whole personality, the emotions especially. I have lived with a tremendous variety of people over these 20 years. Now I am very inclusive and accepting, because I rub shoulders with all sorts of

> people. I am more of a person who can feel, sympathise, and carry compassion and love (J13).

When he was studying at Oxford, he was 'very narrow, very rejecting and very limited' in his heart. He has a wide range of friends now. He claims that he has an ability to relate to people who are totally different from him. Some of his best friends are people who come from completely different backgrounds, whom he has nothing in common with, and whom he would not have said hello to before, but are now very close friends. Liam explains, 'Because we share a vision of Jesus together we have formed close bonds' (J13). It is not ordinary friendship but friendship based on the same faith that has changed his character. He adds:

> I have developed a tremendous variety of talents, everything from working on the farm and driving a tractor. I used to help put up buildings with the building team. I used to drive lorries. The tremendous variety of life has drawn out from me things which I never knew were there. I have been faced with this incredible range of different activities. I think that the richness and variety of life here has made me much more of a rounded person than I was before (J13).

Clara, a 24-year-old woman, started living in one of the community houses of the Jesus Army three years ago when she felt 'genuine love' there. She joins EDP on Friday nights. She thinks she has become a more caring person.

> When you live in a community house, you are with people all the time and I think God uses that to find our characters. Before joining the Jesus Army, I thought I was a very kind person. I moved to a community house, and then I realised that I was not that kind; you are always with people and you discover your motivation for doing things. You do something and it looks good by other people, but only inside there is selfish motivation. I think God changed that within me. My motivation for doing things now is loving people and helping people rather than for my own good (J29).

She recognises that the friendship in the community house changed her, but she believes that God used the friendships to change her attitude. She says, 'I did not like my character and God shaped my character through my relationships with other people' (J29). Drusilla, a style 2 member, also believes that God has changed her:

There are different sorts of people everywhere, but I realise how we are all similar in our hearts, and that by the grace of God we are where we are at this time. I think that God opens our eyes to the needs of others more and more and gives you a heart for certain types of people who you might otherwise never have met because previously you would have mixed only with your own peer group or with people of the same interests, which is quite limiting. Jesus helps you to relate to all people (J3).

Flora, a 40-year-old style 3 member, talked about a role model in the Jesus Army before (see p.232). She talks about the relationship with other members in the Jesus Army, which has developed her altruism:

> When I first came, community living was a tremendous change for me. I found it challenging, in particular the selflessness, a whole giving culture, instead of a culture which I had before where I could choose if I wanted to give to people. I think it has changed me totally as a person, I feel that I am a lot more outward, I find it a lot easier to communicate with people, to share myself. Living in a community I have met all sorts of people; a whole range from the top to the bottom, people I would never have met if I had pursued a different life-style. I think that this has opened my eyes to the whole of humanity, and of course we have so many people here who are hurting, and it has developed compassion in me, I may have been quite hard, a sort of 'Why can't you pull yourself together' sort of attitude if I had not seen what I have seen here (J4).

Sabina, a 36-year-old mitra, used to be a photographer. She would sometimes do photographic work around issues which she felt were important, such as representing campaigns for different charities. She says, 'I think one of the reasons I did photography was that I wanted social change, a better world, better hospitals, better schooling. The photography work that I did tended to be in the public sector and with charities' (F12). She also subscribed to many charities such as Amnesty International, animal groups, and environmental groups. Sabina analyses her behaviour in the past, 'I was very idealistic. Although I was very idealistic, I had a very cynical side. I think that that created an inner conflict; you wonder what the point is. You are doing something which you felt was worthwhile, but begin to feel that it is not having any effect' (F12). A few years ago, she gave up her job as a photographer, which she had done for nine years. She has been in the FWBO for five years, and now she is living with five other female members in a

community house and working at Bodywise in a team of women of the FWBO. She says:

> I don't think I am any more idealistic now, I just think that doing things with other people means that there is much more chance of having an effect. On your own, you just tend to get burnt out or get cynical. We can encourage each other. I acknowledge that I do really need other people to be able to do that. I am not strong enough on my own to keep that going. I think that is one of the things which I have found around here. I find lots of situations easier when I enter them in an altruistic way. I feel I am in situations in work and where I live where we are all trying to encourage each other in a realistic way. It is not denying my own needs. I would say that I am a lot happier in myself. I think I know myself more than I did, or I am more able to be myself, which makes me happier (F12).

Lee, a 33-year-old mitra working for the Karuna Trust attributes his development of altruism to the life in the community house. Before he joined the FWBO, he spent four years living on his own. Lee says:

> Living in a community [house] hasn't been easy, but that is because you only get out of it what you put in - if you don't make friends then your experience is not always good. On the whole I think it has helped me to think about other people a bit more and it is quite a rich experience living with men. I had never lived with men or spent so much time with men, and it has helped me to make friends with men, which I hadn't really done in the past. You share your emotional life with men, whereas outside it doesn't seem that a lot of men do that. They may share their emotional life with women but not with each other. This movement has given me the opportunity to go deeper instead of remaining on the surface (F17).

An introduction brochure of FWBO says, 'if the friendship is with someone more aware and emotionally positive than ourselves, then we can gain tremendously from the experience. In open communication with them we can be lifted on to their level' (Vessantara 'The FWBO: An Introduction', 1996: 29). Lee claims that his friendships in a community house have developed his kind attitude towards others. Other members in the community house encouraged him to speak out, and he feels freer to speak out now than he did in the past. Lee says, 'Some of the people who are more mature in the movement than me have encouraged me to take on more

things!' (F17). The development of his altruism seems to have come with his confidence and responsibility in the movement.

Bill is a 35-year-old mitra living in one of community houses of the FWBO. He talks about the good things of the community living: 'You gain lots of support. People meditate together and practise together. Friendship is developing among people living together. Also practical merit. You cook once a week; you have more time for spiritual life. You can share many facilities' (F25). Initially, however, he found living in a community house hard. Bill used to be very independent. On the other hand, in order to run communal life smoothly, various structures are necessary, such as the time of meditation and meals. He found those things hard. He wanted to be on his own. Bill says:

> Little by little, my friendship with other community members deepened and then I became happier to share my time with them. Also my practices of Buddhism has deepened and I have become more outgoing. So I have become less independent. Carrying on normally independent and self-sufficient way is not healthy. Human beings are interconnected. Being independent is in a sense good, but I used to be overly independent (F25).

Eric, a 39-year-old mitra, also found the life in a community house of the FWBO hard at first. He says, 'I had been used to living on my own and making my own decisions. It was hard to live with five other people who had completely different ideas to mine; mainly around things like food and cleanliness. The kitchen seemed to be quite a point in that community. People didn't buy food that I liked for example' (F22). On the other hand, Eric mentions the merits of living in a community house:

> The people living in the community [house] were more or less following a similar path to what I wanted to follow: simple things like encouragement to meditate. When I was living on my own, it was easier not to meditate sometimes. If other people are doing that, it gives a common purpose and makes it easier for me to do that. Also I find the people very friendly and open and interesting (F22).

One member of the Jesus Army, Horatio, also mentioned both benefits and difficulties of the life in a community house. He has been in a community house of the Jesus Army for three years. He talks about the benefits of community living:

> You have many brothers and sisters, people who will stand by you in the good times and the bad times. They will be near you and support you all of the time. Also you find stability and security in the community, because we cover one another's needs, in terms of money or whatever. Also the community helps you to grow up in maturity and learning how to understand one another. You learn to build up relationships (J21).

He also mentions that living in a community house can be hard:

> because there has to be discipline. So the life in the community [house] can sometimes be hard for some people. Some people are not able to live in a community [house]. That is why we have different styles, so that some people are able to live in a community house and others don't have to. Not every one can cope with the community living. We give up many other things to follow Jesus. We give up certain pleasure for God. It is not a bad thing to do, but it is sacrificial (J21).

John Campbell, a spokesman of the Jesus Army says:

> Almost all of the time the problems get resolved because that is what we want. Obviously, you can't live in a house with people who you have fallen out with. So, in general, we attempt to resolve things in a biblical manner, and we talk things through. We have had some difficulties, which unfortunately only got resolved by somebody moving elsewhere. Generally, things work themselves out (Interview at the Jesus Fellowship Church Central Offices in Northampton on 19th of August, 1998).

On the other hand, Kevin, a 33-year-old Order member living in a community house of the FWBO for 4 years, recounts conflicts concerning the life in a community house, 'from time to time there are conflicts with other members. Some people might do something or not do something and I can feel irritated with that' (F30). Kevin mentions how to work out those issues and to deepen relationships with other members:

> If somebody irritates me, I try to take responsibility for my irritation but also see it objective in the behaviour and try to communicate that openly. I ask 'When you do this, is that quite skilful, is that right, or is that appropriate?' I try to come together in that way, which is not always easy. But without that communication, there is no point to live together (F30).

Kevin points out that tolerance can be at different levels. He says:

> One can tolerate people without much feeling for them. The superficial tolerance is not our idea. The idea is to try to develop and deepen friendship in working through the difficulties. If somebody lives in spiritual life, they ought to become less and less selfish. If they are not, there is something wrong with the way of their life. The behaviour and attitude should be becoming less and less selfish; more and more altruistic. People display that in different ways (F30).

Colette, a 25-year-old mitra, lives in a community house with six female members of the FWBO. Although she has been in the FWBO for five years, it is only nine months since she began living in the community house. She feels a strong friendship in the community house, but she does not think that she is integrated enough at present. She finds the life in the community house simple and focuses on spiritual practices, and she responses to the life. Colette says:

> It is a great way to get to know people. It builds a strong sense of trust. It is good state of my mind. Practising spirituality is to transform yourself. So, difficulty is a good chance to practise. Personalities clash in the community and then spiritual practice kicks in them. There is a conflict of opinions in order to have harmony. There is a difficulty, but it is an opportunity of personal transformation (F26).

She thinks her outlook on life has changed radically. She regards herself as becoming more altruistic: 'I am starting to respond as positively as I can in relationship with the world. I used to want things to be right in a particular way which I was happy with. I can achieve a more generous state of mind to the world' (F26). She thinks that meditation and Buddhist ethics basically help her change from a greedy outlook into a more expansive other-regarding stance. She says, 'The ethics comes not only from the precepts and teachings, but also from other members' attitudes in the community [house]' (F26). Colette considers that everyone has some desire to do something for others but that there is a conflict between one's volition and what one actually does. She recalls, 'I did not know how to do it. People do not know how to do it' (F26). For Colette, the senior members of the community house are exemplars of generosity. Although she sometimes finds the life in the community house difficult, even the difficulty has transformed her

attitudes. Meditation and teachings may have affected her transformation of personality, but it is the relationship with other members in the community house that primarily has developed her altruism.

Tracy, a 35-year-old Order member, had lived in a community house for 10 years before she got married and moved out. She says:

> Personality clashes; a lot of little things such as washing up and shopping. Some people like things to be tidy; some people do not mind. It is a clash of preference. But it is not because people are intolerant. We just have the opportunity to expose those things in a community [house] or work together. It is part of our practice. I think people are just becoming aware of how fixed they are as human beings. We are deliberately trying to change that for the better (F28).

Donald lives outside the community houses of the Jesus Army. He is a style 4 member, lives at a distance from any Jesus Army congregation, and cannot regularly participate in worship and meetings. Although he is a covenant member of the Jesus Army, he calls the members 'they' instead of 'we':

> They have good hearts. They are not Sunday Christians like we get in this country, where you go to church on Sunday and forget it until the next Sunday. They are seven-day a week Christians, and that is what attracted me to them really. They just like your company and want to know about you. They would do evangelism; they would invite people back. They want to keep in touch with you. They phone you and encourage you to come along to meetings and they really want to share what they have all got[7]. It is just their compassion. They are very loyal, very dedicated, very deep and honest. That is something that the rest of the world can't give you (J19).

Donald mentioned friendship. At the moment he is happy with his style of membership. He says, 'Being Style 4, I am under no pressure or obligation to come along to meetings and Agape's and things. Although I do, I am under no pressure. If I was a Style 1 member, I might have had a few requests such as having not to

[7] Actually, during my research period, one of the members phoned me several times.

come so often' (J19). Although Donald admires the Jesus Army, he does not seem to be able to live in a community house. He seems to prefer his own private life[8].

We have examined the development of altruism under three headings. Some of accounts of interviewees of both the movements involved two or even three factors to have developed their altruism. Tracy, a 35-year-old Order member, elaborates on this. She thinks that any factor of the FWBO promotes altruism.

She says:

> It might be a friendship; it might be a meditation practice; it might be working in a business or community, or mixture. People come to a class and share the practice with others. People are learning that your position is not the only position in the world; you need to listen to others and be open to other ways of things; you are not self centred. Those factors promote more awareness and kindness, which lead people to be more altruistic. I do not think you can point to one factor that makes everybody more altruistic (F28).

On the other hand, Tracy is aware that religious practice may mislead people in a different direction unless they are careful. She explains, 'I think that any religious practice can make you become a little bit more precious and selfish in a funny way, if you are not careful. You think you are a bit better than everybody else or you might be so preoccupied by grand visions that you might not visit your friend who is a bit sick. We have to be aware of that' (F28).

Before summarising this chapter, it is worth noting that there are some members who had been deeply involved in charitable activities before they chose to join their movements. For instance, Joel, a 37-year-old Order member, works for the Karuna Trust. Before he joined the FWBO in 1989, he had done many things for different charities. He did voluntary work for the Vegetarian Society and Oxfam, and wrote articles for the Green Party and campaigned for them. He had been a

[8] [View of the Jesus Army, John Campbell] This is fine by us; the reason we have such a wide range of membership styles.

member of Amnesty International for several years and written a number of letters for them. He used to work in a voluntary adult literacy programme; teaching people with learning difficulties. At university he set up a famine relief group to raise money for problems in Ethiopia. His description of life is full of charitable activities.

Joel was born in a working class family and brought up as a Roman Catholic. He had questions about every aspect of Christianity such as 'Who was to say Jesus Christ was right' and 'Who was to say there was a God'. The answers he was given did not make sense to him. His mother and father divorced when he was 11 years old. At that time he changed very much and became very reflective and philosophical about life. In 1984 during the famines in Africa, there was a lot of television publicity, and this once again gave rise to an introspective aspect to him, wondering what life was about and what he was doing with his life and whether it was meaningful. That precipitated him getting very involved in politics. For a number of years he was very involved in the politics of the Third World, peace and ecology issues. Then he began to work as a teacher. He recalls, 'I was also aware that I was suffering quite a bit myself, I wanted to make the world a better place, hoping to do my best to improve things on earth, but I was also very unhappy' (F19).

Joel did not find he was very fulfilled in his work; he did not have enough supportive connections and friendships. Then he left teaching and pursued a hedonistic life-style for a while. He worked in ski resorts and became a ski instructor. Then one day he failed a ski instructor's examination, which made him question what he was doing there. Then he went off and did a solitary retreat to reflect on what he was doing with his life once more. He went into the mountains to spend time on his own to think. That gave rise to the thought that what he did with his life was very important. Joel recalls:

> There is no meaning to life except the meaning you give to it, and it was up to me to give my life a significant meaning. I thought the best meaning I could give it would be to learn how to really love people so that I felt with them, rather than thinking of myself as separate from them (F19).

Then he started looking to see if there was a religion that he believed in. After spending some time reading about a number of different religions, he realised that the nearest thing to what he believed was Buddhism. But he did think that Buddhism, as he had experienced it at that stage, was not very relevant to the 20th century, and he thought that the teachings of the Buddha should be relevant to the world today. One day he heard a radio interview with a member of the FWBO that addressed that issue of making the teachings of the Buddha relevant in the 20th century. He pursued an interest in finding out about the FWBO. It was 1989.

Joel says, 'I am happier, but life is still difficult for me. Practising the spiritual life is very hard' (F19). Although he is very happy with his work at the Karuna Trust, he finds sometimes the work difficult. However, he thinks of the difficulties as opportunity for developing his skills and cultivating himself. Before joining the FWBO, he had already been altruistic and done various charitable activities. Those activities seem to have come from 'the empathetic distress motivation'. He used to be suffering from his own unpleasant emotions as a result of awareness of distress of people and disaster in the world. Joel believes that contemplation based on the teachings of Buddhism and friendships in the FWBO have transformed his view on social work in a positive way.

It is therefore unwise to impute the altruism of members directly to the influence of the movements. Rachel, a 44-year-old Order member, is another example. She has been practising in the FWBO for 11 years. She comes from a middle class background and had a normal schooling in Croydon, South London. Although she was sent to Sunday School, at the age of 11 she decided not to believe in God:

> I was taught the notion that if you were bad you went to hell and if you were good you went to heaven. I think my young mind just couldn't make any logic out of it. I thought that if God was meant to be an all powerful, all loving God, He wouldn't be sending people to hell and He wouldn't be allowing all these terrible things to happen in the world. To me it didn't make sense, so I decided God didn't exist. I disregarded religion because I lost my faith in Christianity (F8).

Thus, it was not Christianity that cultivated her altruism in her childhood. At the age of about 11, she was already aware of social suffering. She did not go immediately to university. She went to train as a nurse and worked as a nurse for six and a half years. Then she decided to go to university and took a degree in social sciences. 'When I was deciding what to do with my life, I knew that I wouldn't be just content to work in an office, work for works sake, where all I am doing is making money to live on' (F8), she recalls. For her, 'it was important to do something which contributes to society and to the well-being of the collective.'

Before joining the FWBO, Rachel used to work as a community worker in a community health project in Lambeth, London. Although she seemed to be altruistic, her life as a community worker was 'very stressful'. Rachel had chosen to work for the well-being of society, but she had been suffering from the work. Rachel felt that meditation would help her in her work and then she happened to encounter the FWBO. 11 years later, she is teaching meditation at a hospital in the HIV and Aids clinic and at the Royal Free Hospital to members of staff. She has been keen to make the most of meditation beyond the Buddhist centre. It seems that there is, in Weberian terms, an elective affinity between the teachings of the FWBO and her values. It is only natural for her to contribute to society and to the well-being of the collective through teaching meditation after she left her job as a community worker and became a full time member of the FWBO. It seems that she found a secure place in the FWBO where she can 'contribute to society and to the well-being of the collective'.

However, this does not mean that she has not changed since she joined the FWBO. Rachel says, 'I think I am more honest and direct. I think I have a greater awareness of others and a greater awareness of the effect I have on others, and the desire to have a positive effect rather than a negative effect' (F8). Rachel defines altruism as 'being other-regarding', and 'Not just considering your own needs but being aware of the needs of other people', she says. She thinks, 'I have a more acute awareness of the fact that by being more open to others and concerned

about others I am more expansive and open in myself, less constricted' (F8). She acknowledges the benefit of altruism: 'Considering yourself alone can be quite a painful state.' The teachings of the FWBO seem to have given her clearer ideas and meanings about how to live and behave.

Chapter summary

We have seen in the questionnaire survey on the members of both the Jesus Army and the FWBO, there were few correlations between charitable acts and variables such as religious commitment and practices (see p.221, 222). Most of the interviewees, however, reported that they became more caring, kinder, or more altruistic since they joined their movements. It is clear that there are various factors which develop their altruism and that the development of altruism differs from individual to individual. Their accounts of the development of their altruism showed factors such as teachings, religious practice, role model, community and friendship. The fact that some of them mentioned a few different factors shows that we cannot point to one factor which makes all the members more altruistic.

Some members of the Jesus Army referred to the Bible, whereas there were few members who mentioned religious practice such as prayer when they were talking about the development of their altruism. In contrast, many members of the FWBO mentioned that the teachings and meditation have promoted their altruism. On the other hand, a newcomer who had attended the meditation class for three months found the practice of loving kindness in the meditation class difficult and did not think that she had cultivated her altruism yet, whilst another newcomer who had attended the meditation class for three months mentioned the development of altruism. The development of altruism differs from individual to individual.

Some interviewees mentioned that their altruism was inspired by role models who were altruistic. For some of the members of the Jesus Army, the role models were Mother Teresa, the Good Samaritan in the Bible, and Jesus himself.

Other members of the Jesus Army and some members of the FWBO mentioned role models who were close at hand in the community houses. Moreover, some of them hope that they are role models for new members.

Socialisation in their communities was the most important factor which nurtured altruism in the Jesus Army and the FWBO. Socialisation is basically a gradual process and primarily consists of the establishment of relationships with other members in the community houses. They have more chances to share their problems and interact with one another on many occasions. Members of both the movements are not only living together but also having a strong sense of friendship. In both the movements, there are fewer members who are married than the general public in the UK, and most members do not have any family members involved in their movements. As examined in chapter six, the members of both the Jesus Army and the FWBO regard friends as more important than their natural family. Moreover, almost half of the FWBO sample in the questionnaire survey are engaged in work linked to the FWBO. They share more time with other members who have the same faith and pursue the religious life. Many interviewees of the both movements talked about friendship in the community.

In the community of the Jesus Army, the members meet a variety of people from different backgrounds and develop their interest in others through meeting different types of people. Although there are a variety of people from different backgrounds, they share the same faith. The members of both the movements mentioned the support, stability, confidence, and security in the community houses. Under such circumstances, friendship based on the same faith has made them more altruistic.

On the other hand, living in a community house can be hard for some people. In the Jesus Army, members are expected to spend most of their spare time together. The fully committed members such as style 3 members have little or no private life, and individual decisions are submitted to the consideration of other members with the instructions of senior leaders. In community houses of the

FWBO, members are also encouraged to spend with other members as much time as possible. Being with other members all the time and oppressing their own desires can give rise to tensions and conflicts which are distinctively its own. In order to maintain the communal living, they need discipline. For some members it is sacrificial, for others it is challenging. Members have to learn how to cope with the difficulties. Most members learn their behaviour in the movements either in imitation of the socialising agents (role models) or in response to their instruction (ethical teachings). The role models and other members in the community transmit the direction of altruism to new converts and the ethical teachings give the legitimation to the direction of altruism. Although there is a possibility that living in a community house makes people more intolerant, the challenge in this situation and circumstance has changed members' attitudes positively towards altruism.

As the cases of two members show (see p. 242-246), we cannot impute members' altruism directly to the influence of any particular teaching or practice of the movements. Some of them had a sense of altruism already when they joined the movement. However, they came to feel secure about their altruism and to see charitable work in a positive way. The symbolic religious reinforcement through religious reality construction had alleviated the empathetic distress they had previously as non-members. Being in the movements has given the members greater confidence in themselves and freed them from their own insecurities so that they can, they believe, reach out more altruistically towards others.

10. Conclusions

My hypothesis is that the more intensely the members are committed to the activities and practices of the two NRMs researched in this thesis, the more altruistic they become, and consequently the members are more likely to help people in need than before they joined the NRMs. This thesis has examined whether the Jesus Army and the FWBO change members' attitudes of mind and behaviour positively towards altruism, what factors of the two NRMs bring this about, and the ways in which the two NRMs change members' attitudes towards altruism. Second, it has considered whether there are common structures in the two NRMs which develop altruism, whether the two NRMs change their members' attitudes towards altruism in a similar way, and how different the interpretations of altruism by their members are.

In the questionnaire survey on the members of both the Jesus Army and the FWBO, there were few correlations between charitable acts and variables such as religious commitment and practices. Although the results of the questionnaire survey did not support my hypothesis, they did reveal the values of members on issues related to altruism. Most of the interviewees reported that they became more caring, kinder, or more altruistic since they joined their movements. They mentioned various developments of altruism. The gap between the results of the questionnaire survey and the findings from the interviews with the members shows that there are various factors which develop altruism and that their development differs from individual to individual.

Many interviewees mentioned the transformations of their attitudes. They claimed that they were carrying out various altruistic activities and acts which they did not do before joining their movement. This provided proof of positive transformations of their attitudes towards altruism. In talking about these transformations, they were reinterpreting and reconstructing the past in the present. When they talked about their attitudes towards altruism, they sometimes

spoke about these in an idealistic way, about how they wanted or ought to be rather than how they were. Even in cases such as this, however, their accounts provided some proof that the two NRMs had changed members' attitudes positively towards altruism, because these ideals reflected the effects on their attitudes of the teachings of the movement.

A member of the FWBO mentioned the possibility that religion could induce selfishness if members were not careful, and there were a few cases where members of the FWBO and the Jesus Army ceased to work for charitable organisations after joining their movement. However, those who ceased to be involved in charitable organisations after joining explained that they were preoccupied with religious activities for people and the world, and they are carrying out charitable activities connected with their movement now. They did not regard themselves as selfish. Indeed, they claimed that they had become more caring and altruistic. Although my research is unable to discuss the issue of NRMs and selfishness because of a lack of data on this question, it, nevertheless, advances our understanding of altruism in the two NRMs in the following ways.

Definitions of altruism and altruistic acts

The working definition of altruism in this research was that 'altruism is behaviour that aims at a termination or reduction of an emergency, a neediness, or disadvantage of others and that primarily does not aim at the fulfillment of own interests', adding that 'the behaviour has to be carried out voluntarily' (Montada & Bierhoff, 1991: 18). Many members of the Jesus Army and the FWBO referred to their altruistic activities and acts, which conform to the above working definition. This research, however, revealed that altruism among the members of the two NRMs had some unique meanings and constructions as results of their involvement in these movements and the effect of their teachings and practices on their thinking and behaviour.

For the members of the Jesus Army, altruism is to exalt people other than themselves and to see the welfare of others' needs rather than seeking their own. When they talked about altruism, some of them referred to reward. Members of the Jesus Army believe that God will reward their altruistic acts and their altruistic deeds towards others are ultimately directed to God. On the other hand, the members of the FWBO claim that they try to live up to the Bodhisattva ideal to benefit others rather than oneself. For them, however, altruism is not totally oriented towards other people. In this case altruism is seen as both personally rewarding as well as rewarding for other people. It is emphasised that people who perform altruistic activities should also take own spiritual and material well-being into account.

There are other differences between the two movements. For example, the members of the Jesus Army believe that their activities such as EDP and visiting prisons are altruistic activities. They claimed that their altruistic activities aimed to help people not so much in practical ways as in spiritual ways. In contrast, a member of the FWBO pointed out that it is more important to give what others need rather than what one thinks they should have. In the case of the FWBO, the ratio of doing charitable activities for groups outside the movement was much higher than that of the Jesus Army. Some members of the FWBO distinguished religious charitable work from non-religious charitable work. On the other hand, some members of the FWBO think that people can perform charitable acts just as ordinary acts of kindness.

Motivation for altruism

In the questionnaire survey, religious motives and altruistic motives were found to be more likely to induce members of both the movements to perform charitable activities than instrumental and obligatory motives (see p. 200, 201).

There were three distinct motivations for their altruism to be found from the interviews: 'empathy', 'rational choice' and 'soteriology' (see chapter 8).

The interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about empathy by using the term 'compassion'. They claimed that they felt compassion for those people who were suffering and that their compassion came from God. The members reached out to those suffering people and showed the same compassion as God shows to them. On the other hand, some members of the FWBO talked about their own distress. When they felt sorry for those who were suffering, they felt empathetic distress themselves. As far as the interviews are concerned, the empathetic distress motivation was not detected in the case of the Jesus Army. The members linked their compassion in a more positive way with the compassion of God (see p. 203-205).

In the case of several interviewees of the FWBO, as I showed (see p.205-213), their motivation for altruism was based on rational choice in the sense that they calculate the reciprocal benefit of members, but this calculation of benefit of a this-worldly kind is not their primary objective of their altruism. Moreover, the questionnaire survey suggested that there was a correlation between members' own happiness and their altruistic acts in the case of the FWBO. In contrast, interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about joy and happiness they gain after altruistic acts. They believe that joy and happiness come from God as reward. Overall, the altruistic acts of the members of the FWBO are more likely to be based on rational choice than for members of the Jesus Army, because as I will point out again below, their attitudes are greatly influenced by the notion of cause and effect known as the doctrine of karma.

The third motivation is soteriological. The interviewees of the Jesus Army talked about self-sacrifice, acts of service to God, helping God's work, and acts for the greater glory of God. They believe that God will bless their acts. On the other hand, the soteriology of the FWBO is based on, as I have just mentioned, the doctrine of karma and the 'no-self' doctrine. The FWBO members have recourse to this doctrine to legitimatise their altruistic acts. Thus, I suggest, there is a strong

link between the rational choice and the doctrine of karma, providing 'rational choice' is understood in the sense discussed above.

Development of altruism

Altruism cannot, I have attempted to show, be attributed solely to the effects on members' attitudes of the teachings and practices of the movements studied here. Those who claimed to have had a sense of altruism prior to joining their movement experienced a sense of greater security in their altruism as a result of their involvement in their movement. The symbolic religious reinforcement through religious reality construction had alleviated the empathetic distress they had previously felt as non-members, and they now feel greater compassion but without distress. Being in the movements has given the members greater confidence in themselves and freed them from their own insecurities so that they can, they believe, reach out more altruistically towards others. Other interviewees claimed that they had cultivated altruism in the movements. Their accounts of the development of their altruism showed that the significant factors in this 'conversion' to altruism were the teachings and practices of the movements, the role models, and the community and friends in the movements. The fact that some of them mentioned several different factors shows that we cannot point to one single factor on its own as the independent variable in every case.

Some members of the Jesus Army referred to the Bible, whereas few members mentioned religious practice such as prayer when they were talking about the underlying reasons for development of their altruism. In contrast, many members of the FWBO mentioned that teachings and meditation had promoted their altruism. On the other hand, a newcomer to the FWBO who had attended the meditation class for three months found the practice of 'loving kindness' in the meditation class difficult and did not think that she had cultivated her altruism yet, whilst another newcomer who had attended the meditation class for three months

mentioned the development of altruism. The development of altruism differs from individual to individual.

Some interviewees mentioned that their altruism was inspired by role models who were altruistic. For some of the members of the Jesus Army, the role models were Mother Teresa, the Good Samaritan in the Bible, and Jesus himself. Other members of the Jesus Army and some members of the FWBO mentioned role models who were close at hand in the community houses such as senior members. Moreover, some of them hope that they are role models for new members.

The most important factor in the development of altruism in the Jesus Army and the FWBO was friendship with other members of the community houses. Forming friendships is integrated to the process of socialisation, which itself is a gradual process. Those members who live in community houses have more chance to share their problems and interact with one another frequently. Members of both movements not only live together but also have a strong sense of solidarity. In both movements, there are fewer married members than in the rest of the population in the UK. Moreover, most of the members do not have any family members involved in their movements. Members of both the Jesus Army and the FWBO regard friends as more important than their natural family. Moreover, almost half of the FWBO sample in the questionnaire survey are engaged in work linked to the FWBO, and, therefore, spend much time with others of the same faith and with the same ideals.

In the community of the Jesus Army, the members meet a variety of people from different backgrounds and develop their altruistic interest in others through meeting many different types of people (see p.234-236). Members of both movements mentioned the support, stability, confidence, and security they received from the community members. In such circumstances, they claimed, friendship based on the same faith made them more altruistic.

Living in a community house can, however, be hard for some people. Acceptance of rules and participation in activities are just the first step to the challenge of communal living. Some members experienced tensions and anxieties

when they joined the community houses. In the Jesus Army, members are expected to spend most of their spare time together, and the fully committed members have little or no private life. Individuals submit their personal decisions to senior leaders for their approval. In community houses of the FWBO, members are also encouraged to spend as much time as possible with other members. Being with other members all the time and suppressing their own desires can give rise to particular kinds of tensions and conflicts and, thus, discipline is needed to maintain harmony in communal living. Some members see this as sacrifice, others as a challenge. New members acquire a basic grasp of the essential teachings, and learn the norms governing everyday behaviour largely through their contacts with senior members. Most members learn their behaviour either by imitating these agents of socialisation, who act as role model. The role models and other members in the community transmit the content of altruism to new converts and the ethical teachings give it legitimation. Although there is a possibility that living in a community house can make people more intolerant, overall the challenge in this situation has brought about a positive change in members' attitudes towards altruism.

Altruism and NRMs

This research has considered whether there are common structures in the two NRMs which develop altruism, whether the two NRMs change their members' attitudes towards altruism in a similar way, and how different the interpretations of altruism by their members are. Although we cannot generalise about altruism in NRMs on the basis of this research for the reason that NRMs are very varied, this research has revealed, nevertheless, some common structures and different values which were considered to develop altruism.

The similarities between the Jesus Army and the FWBO were the first reason for selecting the two movements for this research. The results of the survey

showed that both of the movements had a high proportion of individuals who had no family members involved and that the members regarded friends as more important than their own families. The members value friendship and communal living where they share many things with other members and pursue religious life. Both movements have businesses and those who work for the businesses are able to share much time with other members and pursue the religious life. In addition, the members of both movements believe that their movement should speak out on social issues. These common structures and values seem to develop their altruism. The Jesus Army has intense commitment to biblical fundamentalism of belief and practice, whereas the FWBO puts emphasis on Buddhist ethics. Overall, both movements have an ideal of positive transformation of altruism to reach out to the suffering of the world. However, the major differences must be recognised. The love of the Jesus Army and the loving kindness of the FWBO arise out of radically different paths and are based on different religious visions on human beings and the world. These differences seem to be related to the differences of religion in the second reason for choosing the Jesus Army and the FWBO for this research.

The second reason was that the Jesus Army and the FWBO are derived from different religions, Christianity and Buddhism respectively. According to the description of two categories of prophecy provided by Weber (1978: 447-450), the Jesus Army was classed as an NRM based on 'ethical prophecy' and the FWBO as an NRM based on 'exemplary prophecy'. In 'ethical prophecy' the prophet may be an instrument for the proclamation of a god and his will and receives a commission from god to demand obedience as an ethical duty. The meanings and constructions of altruism in the Jesus Army are coloured by ethical duty such as acts of service to God, and the members believe that the reward will be given by God. Regarding the motivations for their altruism, they are not caused by empathetic distress and most of their motivations are based on soteriology. In contrast, in 'exemplary prophecy' the prophet is an exemplary man who demonstrates to others the way to religious salvation which he himself found. Although some members

used to have the empathetic distress motivation, the doctrine of karma and the 'no-self' doctrine gave them an endorsement of their altruism. Consequently, they have greater confidence in themselves and are free from their own insecurities which came from the empathetic distress. The altruism of the members of the FWBO does not involve obedience to anything. Indeed, many interviewees talked about their motivations based on rational choice.

The third reason for selecting the two NRMs was typological. In the first typology provided by Wilson (1976: 63) is: (1) The first theme: salvation is gained by becoming acquainted with a special, perhaps secret, knowledge from a mystic source; (2) the second theme: ultimate salvation and knowledge comes from the liberation of powers within the self; (3) the third theme: real salvation is attained by belonging to a sacred community, whose life-style and concerns are utterly divergent from those of worldly people. The Jesus Army was found to be categorised by the third theme of the typology in that it values communal living and believes that Jesus is establishing the ultimate Kingdom of God, while the FWBO was found to be classed by both the second and the third categories in that it values enlightenment, communal living and spiritual fellowship. Although the first category is beyond this study and this research cannot mention it, it seems reasonable from this research to suppose that NRMs in both the second and the third categories can develop altruism. More case studies are necessary for the validity of the supposition.

In the second typology of NRMs provided by Wallis (1984), the Jesus Army was found to be categorised as a world-rejecting movement since it condemns social ills in urban society, values communal living, and believes that Jesus has established his rule against the prevailing social order and that Jesus is establishing the ultimate Kingdom of God. The FWBO was found to be categorised as a world-affirming movement since it emphasises enlightenment and individual development, and offers immediate benefits through meditation. This research suggests that altruism of the world-rejecting movement may require sacrifice and

that altruism of the world-affirming movement may be largely based on rational choice. The difference of orientations towards the world is considered as one of the factors which may make the different interpretations of altruistic acts performed by the members.

Summary of conclusions

Although the results of the questionnaire did not support my hypothesis, they did reveal the values of members on issues related to altruism and the findings from the interviews proved that both the Jesus Army and the FWBO changed members' attitudes of mind and behaviour positively towards altruism. The words by which the interviewees expressed their definitions of altruism and motivation for it showed some different inclinations between the Jesus Army and the FWBO according to their characteristics. The members of the Jesus Army believe that everything is a gift from God and they need God's endorsement of their social life. The teachings play the role of prescribing moral precepts, and the members of the Jesus Army appear to adhere in practice to a strict moral code. In contrast, the members of the FWBO accept the teaching of karma which requires full responsibility for their acts, and they have the ideal that more aspects of society are positively influenced by Buddhist teachings and ethics.

This research also showed that altruism in the two NRMs was developed best not by reading about teachings, or by listening to sermons, but by being part of communal living. In other words, altruism is developed not so much by sermons that motivate members to carry out altruistic acts as it is by the relationships with other members who have the same faith and try to help each other. Relationships between members are essential for making them more altruistic. Ethical teachings put emphasis on the values of kindness, compassion, and love. The combination of human contact in the movements and ethical teachings such as compassion and virtue develops altruism.

The Jesus Army and the FWBO were found to have common structures which developed altruism, while this research also showed that there were unshared characteristics of the two movements which affected differently the members' attitudes towards altruism. The difference between Christianity and Buddhism from which the Jesus Army and the FWBO respectively derive seem to indicate the major difference of their altruism. Moreover, the two NRMs were categorised by the typologies of Wilson (1984) and Wallis (1984). The two categories of Wilson's typology seem to nurture altruism (see p.257), while the two different orientations towards the world provided by the typology of Wallis seems to make different interpretations of altruism (see p.257, 258). More case studies are necessary to discuss these possibilities.

I assumed that the altruistic activities of NRMs would create conflicts with society, because altruism based on religious belief could be regarded as intrusive by a society which would not expect religion to play a major role in cultural integration or moral order. The Jesus Army sometimes faces criticism for recruiting homeless people rather than helping them. However, it claims that through those kinds of activities they want to see God glorified and honoured. For the members of the Jesus Army, the expansion of the movement in number means the manifestation of the glory of God. Apart from that criticism, no interviewees of either movement mentioned any serious conflicts between their altruistic activities and society. One possibility would be to assume that the impact of their activities on society is too insignificant to cause major conflicts with it. Another possibility is that their charitable activities are well accepted by society. One of the future directions of research on altruism in NRMs could be to encompass the examination of these possibilities.

Appendices

Survey of the Jesus Army (the Jesus Fellowship Church)

This survey is part of a doctoral thesis at King's College, London University. It will take about 15 minutes to fill out this questionnaire. In answering, please put a tick in the boxes, or circle the appropriate number if categories are provided. The information you provide here will be treated as confidential and anonymous. Thank you very much in anticipation.

Keishin INABA
Department of Theology & Religious Studies,
King's College, London University

Q1 *Are you a covenant member?* No ☐
Style 1☐ Style 2 ☐ Style 3 ☐ Style 4☐

Q2 *How long have you been a member of the Jesus Fellowship?*

_____ years _____ months

Q3 *Before joining the Jesus Fellowship, did you regard yourself as belonging to any religious movements or churches? If yes, please specify.*

Q4 *How would you rate your religiosity before joining the Jesus Fellowship? (please circle)*
Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q5 *How did you first encounter the Jesus Fellowship? Through:* Family ☐ A friend ☐
A casual acquaintance ☐ A work colleague ☐
A member on the streets ☐
Literature or publicity ☐ An event ☐
Any other (please specify)

Q6 *What proportion of your family are also members?* None ☐ Very few ☐
About half ☐ The majority ☐ All ☐

Q7 *What proportion of your close friends are also members?* None ☐ Very few ☐
About half ☐ The majority ☐ All ☐

Q8 *How often do you pray?*
Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Every few days ☐
Once a day☐ More than once a day ☐

Q9 *How often do you read the Bible?*
Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Every few days ☐
Once a day☐ More than once a day ☐

Q10 *How would you rate your commitment to the Jesus Fellowship? (please circle)*
Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q11 *Do you think it proper for religious bodies to speak out on?*

	Yes	No
A) Disarmament	☐	☐
B) Third World Problems	☐	☐
C) Racial Discrimination	☐	☐
D) Ecology and Environment	☐	☐
E) Government Policy	☐	☐

Q12 *Please say for each of the following, to what extent you are: (please circle)*

	Not at all				Very
A) Conservative	1	2	3	4	5
B) Sociable	1	2	3	4	5
C) Careful	1	2	3	4	5
D) Talkative	1	2	3	4	5
E) Reliable	1	2	3	4	5
F) Secure	1	2	3	4	5
G) Selfish	1	2	3	4	5
H) Adventurous	1	2	3	4	5
I) Good-natured	1	2	3	4	5
J) Calm	1	2	3	4	5

Q13 *Please say for each of the following, to what degree it could be justified. (please circle)*

	Never									Always
A) Abortion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
B) Suicide	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
C) Homosexuality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
D) Extramarital affairs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Q14 *Please say for each of the following, how important it is in your life. (please circle)*

	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
A) Family	1	2	3	4
B) Friends	1	2	3	4
C) Leisure	1	2	3	4
D) Politics	1	2	3	4

Q15 *Have you undertaken any charitable activities (e.g. working for a charity shop, raising money, social welfare services, etc.) in this one year? If yes, please specify.*

Please turn over

Q16 *Please say for each of the following, how frequently you: (please circle)*

(1:never, 5:very often)

a) Give directions to a stranger [1 2 3 4 5]
b) Give money to a charity [1 2 3 4 5]
c) Give money to a homeless person [1 2 3 4 5]
d) Donate goods or clothes to a charity [1 2 3 4 5]
e) Help a disabled or elderly stranger across a street [1 2 3 4 5]
f) Offer your seat on a bus or train to a stranger [1 2 3 4 5]

Q17 *Thinking about your reasons for doing activities and acts of Q15 & Q16, please say for each of the following, how important it is <u>in your own case:</u> (please circle)*

(1:unimportant, 5: very important)

a) A sense of solidarity with the poor and disadvantaged [1 2 3 4 5]
b) Compassion for those in need [1 2 3 4 5]
c) An opportunity to repay something, give something back [1 2 3 4 5]
d) A sense of duty, moral obligation [1 2 3 4 5]
e) Identifying with people who are suffering [1 2 3 4 5]
f) Having time on your hands and want something worthwhile to do [1 2 3 4 5]
g) Personal satisfaction [1 2 3 4 5]
h) Religious beliefs [1 2 3 4 5]
i) To help give disadvantaged people hope and dignity [1 2 3 4 5]
j) To make a contribution to your local community [1 2 3 4 5]
k) To bring about social or political change [1 2 3 4 5]
l) Opportunity to meet people [1 2 3 4 5]
m) To gain new skills and useful experience [1 2 3 4 5]
n) You do not want to but can not refuse [1 2 3 4 5]

Q18 *How would you rate the commitment of your family to charitable activities in your childhood? (please circle)*

Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q19 *How would you rate your commitment to charitable activities before joining the Jesus Fellowship? (please circle)*

Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q20 *Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life now? (please circle)*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Dissatisfied Satisfied

Please now answer some questions about yourself, which are necessary in order to classify your answers and to make statistical comparisons. Anonymity will be preserved.

Q21 *What is your age?*

____

Q22 *Are you:* Male ☐ Female ☐

Q23 *Are you celibate now?* Yes ☐ No ☐

Q24 *What is your marital status?* Single ☐
Married ☐ Widowed ☐ Living as married ☐
Divorced or separated ☐

Q25 *In which country were you born?*

Q26 *What is your highest educational qualification?* None ☐ GCSE, O level, CSE ☐
A level ☐ 1st degree ☐ Higher degree ☐
Any other (please specify)

Q27 *Where do you work?*
Business linked to the Jesus Fellowship ☐
Work within a community house ☐
Business not linked to the Jesus Fellowship ☐
Self-employed ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐
Full-time student ☐
Housewife (not otherwise employed) ☐
Any other (please specify)

Please use this space to write any additional comments you may have.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. Please return it to me at this evening worship or on next Sunday. If you cannot attend either of them, please hand it to your friend who will return it to me on behalf of you. You could send it to

Mr. Inaba
Dept. of Theology & Religious Studies
King's College London
Strand
London WC2R 2LS

Survey of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

This survey is part of a doctoral thesis at King's College, London University. It will take about 15 minutes to fill out this questionnaire. In answering, please put a tick in the boxes, or circle the appropriate number if categories are provided. The information you provide here will be treated as confidential and anonymous. Thank you very much in anticipation.

Keishin INABA
Department of Theology & Religious Studies,
King's College, London University

Q1 *Are you;* Mitra living in a community house ☐
Mitra not living in a community house ☐
Order member living in a community house ☐
Order member not living in a community house ☐

Q2 *How long have you been a member of the FWBO?*
_____ years _____ months

Q3 *Before joining the FWBO, did you regard yourself as belonging to any religious movements or churches? If yes, please specify.*

Q4 *How would you rate your religiosity before joining the FWBO? (please circle)*
Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q5 *How did you first encounter the FWBO? Through:* Family ☐ A friend ☐
A casual acquaintance ☐ A work colleague ☐
A member on the streets ☐
Literature or publicity ☐ An event ☐
Any other (please specify)

Q6 *What proportion of your family are also members?* None ☐ Very few ☐
About half ☐ The majority ☐ All ☐

Q7 *What proportion of your close friends are also members?* None ☐ Very few ☐
About half ☐ The majority ☐ All ☐

Q8 *How often do you meditate?*
Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Every few days ☐
Once a day ☐ More than once a day ☐

Q9 *How often do you read the Buddhist teachings?*
Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Every few days ☐
Once a day ☐ More than once a day ☐

Q10 *How would you rate your commitment to the FWBO? (please circle)*
Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q11 *Do you think it proper for religious bodies to speak out on?*

	Yes	No
A) Disarmament	☐	☐
B) Third World Problems	☐	☐
C) Racial Discrimination	☐	☐
D) Ecology and Environment	☐	☐
E) Government Policy	☐	☐

Q12 *Please say for each of the following, to what extent you are: (please circle)*

	Not at all				Very
A) Conservative	1	2	3	4	5
B) Sociable	1	2	3	4	5
C) Careful	1	2	3	4	5
D) Talkative	1	2	3	4	5
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F) Secure	1	2	3	4	5
G) Selfish	1	2	3	4	5
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D) Extramarital affairs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Q14 *Please say for each of the following, how important it is in your life. (please circle)*

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B) Friends	1	2	3	4
C) Leisure	1	2	3	4
D) Politics	1	2	3	4

Q15 *Have you undertaken any charitable activities (e.g. working for a charity shop, raising money, social welfare services, etc.) in this one year? If yes, please specify.*

Please turn over

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(1:never, 5:very often)

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(1:unimportant, 5: very important)

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b) Compassion for those in need [1 2 3 4 5]
c) An opportunity to repay something, give something back [1 2 3 4 5]
d) A sense of duty, moral obligation [1 2 3 4 5]
e) Identifying with people who are suffering [1 2 3 4 5]
f) Having time on your hands and want something worthwhile to do [1 2 3 4 5]
g) Personal satisfaction [1 2 3 4 5]
h) Religious beliefs [1 2 3 4 5]
i) To help give disadvantaged people hope and dignity [1 2 3 4 5]
j) To make a contribution to your local community [1 2 3 4 5]
k) To bring about social or political change [1 2 3 4 5]
l) Opportunity to meet people [1 2 3 4 5]
m) To gain new skills and useful experience [1 2 3 4 5]
n) You do not want to but can not refuse [1 2 3 4 5]

Q18 *How would you rate the commitment of your family to charitable activities in your childhood? (please circle)*

Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q19 *How would you rate your commitment to charitable activities before joining the FWBO? (please circle)*

Weak [1 2 3 4 5] Strong

Q20 *Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life now? (please circle)*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Dissatisfied Satisfied

Please now answer some questions about yourself, which are necessary in order to classify your answers and to make statistical comparisons. Anonymity will be preserved.

Q21 *What is your age?*

____

Q22 *Are you:* Male ☐ Female ☐

Q23 *Are you celibate now?* Yes ☐ No ☐

Q24 *What is your marital status?* Single ☐
Married ☐ Widowed ☐ Living as married ☐
Divorced or separated ☐

Q25 *In which country were you born?*

Q26 *What is your highest educational qualification?* None ☐ GCSE, O level, CSE ☐
A level ☐ 1st degree ☐ Higher degree ☐
Any other (please specify)

Q27 *Where do you work?*
Business linked to the FWBO ☐
Work within a community house ☐
Business not linked to the FWBO ☐
Self-employed ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐
Full-time student ☐
Housewife (not otherwise employed) ☐
Any other (please specify)

Please use this space to write any additional comments you may have.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. Please return it to the LBC as soon as possible. Otherwise please send it to

Mr. Inaba
Dept. of Theology & Religious Studies
King's College London
Strand
London WC2R 2LS

Interview schedule

The information you give me in this interview will be treated as confidential and anonymous.

[Part 1]

What is your name?

How old are you?

What is your nationality?

Are you married?

Have you chosen celibacy?

How many children do you have?

(The Jesus Army) Are you a covenant member?

No ☐ Style 1 ☐ Style 2 ☐ Style 3 ☐ Style 4 ☐

(The FWBO) Are you, mitra, Order member? Do you live in a community house?

[Part 2]

Could you describe your upbringing and your family background?

Could you briefly describe your childhood circumstances?

Could you tell me your religious background?

Have you ever belonged to any religious group before you joined this movement?

If yes, which one, and why did you leave the movement?

[Part 3]

How long have you been in this movement?

What was your first contact with this movement?

What were your circumstances at that time?

Were you seeking some solutions for particular problems at that time?

What was it about the movement that attracted you?

[Part 4]

What was your next step? How have you become committed to this movement?

Could you briefly describe your religious life and practice regarding this movement?

(The Jesus Army) How often do you spend time in private prayer?

(The FWBO) How often do you spend time in private meditation? How about chanting?

(The Jesus Army) How often do you personally read or study the Bible?

(The FWBO) How often do you personally read or study Buddhist teaching?

(The Jesus Army) What is Noel Stanton for you?

(The FWBO) What is Sangharakshita for you?

[Part 5]

If you live in a community house, could you tell me about good things and bad things of living a community house?

What have been the benefits of belonging to this movement?

How has this movement affected your attitude?

What is your relationship with your parents, family?

[Part 6]

Have you undertaken any charitable activities (e.g. raising money, social welfare services, working for charity shop etc.)?

If yes, what and why do you do it?

How do you feel after doing the activities?

Why did you get involved in the activities?

What have you liked the most about it?

What would you say your most memorable experience has been with the activities?

Did you have any difficulties of conflict in doing the activities?

How do you cope with it?

How was the commitment of your family to charitable activities in your childhood?

How was your commitment to charitable activities before joining the movement?

[Part 7]

Do you know the term 'altruism'? How do you define the term 'altruism'?

What kinds of activities are altruistic to you?

Do you think you are altruistic? In what ways are you altruistic?

To what do you attribute your altruism?

How has this movement influenced your behaviour in that way?

[Part 8]

What is your highest level of education?

Where do you work?

Do you have any requests or complaints about this movement?

Glossary

The Apostles' Creed: The Apostles' Creed is the ancient Baptismal creed of the Church. Candidates for Baptism would recite it as part of their vows, and it continues to be used every time Baptism is administered.

> I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.
>
> *catholic (lower-case) meaning the church universal, the Body of Christ, and is accepted by Protestants and Roman Catholics.
> (Net Ministries, Inc. webmaster@netministries.org: October 26, 1998)

The Athanasian Creed:

> Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith. Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; Neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet they are not three eternals but one eternal. As also there are not three uncreated nor three incomprehensible, but one uncreated and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty. And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; And yet they are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord; And yet they are not three Lords but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord; So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say; There are three Gods or three Lords. The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the

Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity none is afore or after another; none is greater or less than another. But the whole three persons are coeternal, and coequal. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity. Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man. God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man of substance of His mother, born in the world. Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood. Who, although He is God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of that manhood into God. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead; He ascended into heaven, He sits on the right hand of the Father, God, Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies; and shall give account of their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved.
(From the Christian Classics Ethereal Library at Calvin College on May 27, 1999.)

EDP: An acronym of 'Eat, Drink, Pray'. EDP is one of ~~a~~ the activities of the Jesus Army. Once a month the Jesus Army runs four-day EDP in London. They walk the streets for a few hours befriending night-clubbers and the homeless. At intervals they return to their bus at Trafalgar Square, sit newcomers down with a cup of tea and provide them with a hot meal.

Karuna: Pali: compassion

Kesa: A religious garment. Order members of the FWBO usually wear kesa around the neck at the FWBO classes or events. The FWBO kesa is a strip of silk-like material embroidered with three flaming jewels symbolising the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Most Order members wear a white kesa, but those who are officially committed to celibacy wear a golden-yellow one.

Metta: Pali: loving-kindness

Metta Bhavana: Pali: development or cultivation of loving-kindness

Mitra: 'Mitra' is a Sanskrit word for 'friend'. A mitra is someone who opts for a more intense involvement in the FWBO. Some mitras have asked for ordination, others may remain mitras. It is rare to become a mitra in less than two years from first contact with the FWBO. There are four main requirements for mitra applicants:(1) applicants decide that the FWBO is the group they are going to stay with of all the many Buddhist and other spiritual groups; (2) applicants are meditating regularly; (3) applicants really feel that an FWBO centre is their centre and do what they can to help it to support Order members in their work; (4) applicants are going to keep in contact with Order members.

The Nicene Creed: The Nicene Creed is a fairly complete statement of the Church's faith in the Holy Trinity, dating from the fourth century and developed in response to a number of erroneous teachings about how God was in Christ. It is recited at all Sunday and Holy Day celebrations of the Eucharist. Most Episcopalians have it memorised.

> I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.
> (From the Christian Classics Ethereal Library at Calvin College on May 27, 1999.)

Order member: The main body of the FWBO is the Western Buddhist Order (WBO), which was founded one year after the founding of the FWBO. The members of the WBO, they are called Order members, are responsible for directing the activities of the FWBO. Although Order members commit themselves fully to following the Buddhist Path to Enlightenment and to Sangharakshita as their spiritual teacher, they are not monks or nuns and do not live a monastic life-style. Some work full-time running the FWBO centres, working on publications of the FWBO, or in a retail gift business which raises money for the FWBO. Others work outside the FWBO. In order to become an Order member, an ordination is required. Although anyone can ask for ordination when they want to be ordained, it usually takes several years to become ready for ordination.

Style1, 2, 3, 4: The Jesus Army has different styles of covenant membership with different levels of commitment:

- Style 1 covenant members have been baptised by immersion and join in a heart-to-heart covenant relationship. They are often those who are spiritually 'young' in Jesus and cannot yet handle a stronger commitment. Others are 'Style One' because of their circumstances. 'Style One Members' normally attend the Tuesday evening Agape meal and weekend meetings of the church household and congregation.
- Style 2 covenant members resembles style 1; except they have a stronger commitment. This includes a recognition of the radical nature of Kingdom of God culture, with time, financial and serving commitments. It is for those who retain their own house and lifestyle but who are keen to live in simplicity, discipleship and sharing.
- Style 3 covenant members have a much stronger commitment; they see the Kingdom of God in the church and desire the church family to be a community over which Jesus is Lord. They live in the community houses and share wealth, possessions and income.
- Style 4 covenant members resemble style 1, except they live at a distance from any Jesus Army congregation, so cannot regularly participate.

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